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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Tomb RAIDER 2

Lara Croft Gets Wet And Wild



OVER

100

GAMES INSIDE

98

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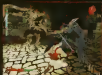
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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

NUMBER 10.9, SEPTEMBER 1997

By Joe Funk • Joe_Funk@zd.com

• There are two big reasons why Lara's become a star

OK, OK, I know we're going to get a ton of questions and e-mails about our Lara Croft coverage the last two months. Just what is going on here? Are the single guys on the staff not doing enough? Did we not put enough saltwater in the EGM staff's water supply?

Our reasons are obvious. She's hot. Readers are interested in her. Sports Illustrated doesn't quit covering Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls halfway through the playoffs because it's already been done. You cover a star when it's shooting.

After just one installment in what will surely become a truckload of games featuring her, Lara Croft has become the first lady of video games.

How did this happen? It's simple really—Lara is the proud owner of a pair of assets that have been the key to her success. And they're not as obvious as you think.

First is the depth of Lara's character. A lot of it has to do with details, hats off to Eidos for sweating them. In Tomb Raider, Lara displayed an unprecedented variety of moves and animations that gave her an almost lifelike quality. Lara finds herself hanging from cliffs, jumping over broken bridges and taking on a T-Rex. She's also tough. She's athletic. She's got a can-do mentality. And, don't underestimate this, you can see her quite clearly, and learn a lot by just looking at her—you can roughly determine her age, her skin tone, her height, her weight, her eye color, her hair style, her dress size and even her bra size. It's a tried-and-true Hollywood formula: The more the audience feels like they know the hero, the more people will care for her (or him). With Lara, Eidos has pushed the envelope in video game character development.

The second ingredient is the game she debuted in. Tomb Raider cemented a new genre of video game that is something of a cross between a shooter, an action game



Hero worship. Lara Croft has elevated the female heroine to a new level.

and an RPG. In the copycat mentality of entertainment, TR was a refreshing change, and gamers loved it. A few earlier games attempted the 3-D format in console games (Out of This World, Fade to Black), but the unprecedented fluidity and gameplay of TR established it as a dynamic and permanent new game genre as the evolution of video games continues.

Add these two components together, and Lara Croft represents a classic example of thinking outside the box. Eidos has tapped into a fresh vein of excitement, and in addition to the huge economic reward they have reaped as a result, they have also earned a salute from us here at EGM for taking chances.

Now, let's get to the question I know most of you were wondering about: How much does Lara's super-human measurements feed into this frenzy? Well, it's no secret we're in a testosterone-rich industry. If some guys get a little extra something out of a game by controlling a character because they...uh, like the arrangement of her polygons, that's their business—we'd rather not know about it. It's one of the undeniable and recognizable details of Lara, but unlike Pamela Anderson Lee, by no means is it the sole reason for her celebrity.

As for parents who are in fear that their kids are going to want to control Barbie-doll-type heroines in every future video game they play, I wouldn't worry too much. It's no stranger than controlling an Italian midget plumber or a sneaker-wearin' maverick. That's the point. Video games are about an escape to somewhere, something and sometimes someone else.

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Check for unresponsive

Gently tap & ask, "Are



Figure 5-3



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NUMBER 98

TOMB RAIDER

ALL BRAUN, BRAINS AND GOOD LOOKS. LARA CROFT MAKES A COMEBACK IN TOMB RAIDER 2. THE STORY STARTS ON PAGE 82.

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BONUS INSIDE

FREE POSTER

YOU WANT THE GOODS?
Packed into this awesome September issue of EGM is a PIN-UP poster of everyone's favorite LADY OF ACTION, LARA CROFT. Clad in a sexy bikini with pistols raised, tack her up just about anywhere!



THIS MONTH



68

EGM PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE E³ NEWS

The E³ excitement is still abuzz with its showings of the latest games. *EGM* continues the info on one of the biggest shows. Find out which games were hot and which games were not! E³ coverage wraps up on page 68.

"...companies are resorting to restricting access to part of, or even all of, their booths."

LUCKY LADY LARA IS BACK IN HER SEQUEL TO TOMB RAIDER

Our favorite heroine, Lara Croft, is back and ready to take on a whole new mission as well as a bunch of tough beasts and bad guys. In this issue read about the mission, Lara's new streamline look and the foes she must battle. The story begins on page 82!

"Lara will go up against sharks, eels and enough other aquatic nightmares to pack Sweeps Month on the Discovery Channel!"



82



100

PLAY AS BOND...JAMES BOND IN GOLDENEYE 007

NG4 owners will be able to play as everyone's favorite spy in GoldenEye 007. This impressive first-person shooter has detailed missions for each of the difficulty levels. This game also works with the Rumble Pak, so you'll feel as if you were right in the middle of the action. The Next Wave starts on page 100.

"And just like any super agent, Bond is armed to the teeth."

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FINAL FANTASY VII

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by Todd Mowatt
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THE BEST VIDEO GAME NEWS

PRESS

START

N64 AFTER ONE YEAR

NINTENDO JUST MISSES THE HONOR ROLL

The Nintendo 64 turns one year old later this month (Sept. 29), but Sony still holds the lead in terms of industry buzz and systems sold. Many gaming pundits suggest that Nintendo's outdated

policy of secrecy makes it difficult for the average consumer to get the buzz on any new first-party titles developed here in the U.S. Sony on the other hand has gamers buzzing about a game long before it's released.

"The key is going to be capturing the older audience, and with great sports titles and harder-edged games, they can do it."

policy of secrecy makes it difficult for the average consumer to get the buzz on any new first-party titles developed here in the U.S. Sony on the other hand has gamers buzzing about a game long before it's released.

Let's take a look at the events of the past year, including the recent price drop to \$149 and the announcement of the 64DD add-on as well as the Rumble Pak peripheral. The biggest

complaint from gamers over the past year has been the lack of games out for the system.

Nintendo's contention all along has been that it's quality, not quantity that will draw gamers to the N64. While the first-party games for the most part have been of high quality, there have been a few exceptions like *Killer Instinct*, *FIFA 64*, *War Gods*, *FIFA 64* and *Cruis'n USA*. The lack of industry buzz is hurting them in the marketplace and with the third-party development community.

"I think the Nintendo 64 is doing pretty well. They created a lot of anticipation and when *Mario* finally shipped, it certainly got everyone's attention. Here was a game that didn't exist on the PlayStation in any guise," said Colin Gordon,

and Nintendo has a great resource with EAD (the internal development group headed up by Shigeru Miyamoto). The key is going to be capturing the older audience, and with great sports titles and "harder-edged" games, they can do it. Sony has far too many titles in circulation, and very few of them are really great."

Third-party publishers have up until now been shying

away from Nintendo as

the \$35 cost of goods has caused many developers to stick with the PlayStation, where it costs them \$7 per game. Nintendo has recently improved the business model for third-party developers by at least half (\$1750). Now gamers should see more developers making games for the N64.

In addition, Nintendo recently gave out technical support to developers on how to program for the 64DD and the Rumble Pak.

"I'm not sure that this is a situation where Sony or Nintendo have to beat each other," said Mike Snider, U.S.A. Today reporter. "But to stay competitive, they need to continue to make superior games like *Mario 64*, *Star Fox 64* and *Banjo-Kazooie*. Overall, the games on the N64 are a little better just because of the additional 3-D experiences. Building on their previous success is the best thing they've done. Not getting enough development has been a huge mistake."

There are many different opinions as to how Nintendo has done in relation to Sony and only time will tell whether the gap will increase or decrease.

"I have been VERY impressed [with the Nintendo 64] and it just took far too long to launch around the world. Nintendo has handled some aspects well and some not so well, but [there are] more wells than not wells," said David Perry, president of Shiny Entertainment, a division of Interplay

N64 REPORT CARD

Hardware:	A+
Nintendo Software:	A+
Pricing:	C+
Marketing:	A+
Third-Party Developer Support:	C
Dream Team Software:	D
Media Relations:	D
Overall Rating:	B



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N64 GAMERS GET READY TO RUMBLE

NEW RUMBLE PAK GAMES REVEALED

Reports out of Japan have indicated that long-time president of Nintendo Hiroshi Yamauchi was considering retirement. In an interview with the Japanese newspaper *Asahi*, Yamauchi said, "I can't work forever. I am at that stage where I have to think about the end. My job is until 2000." He went on to talk about how the N64 add-on to the N64 will be his last triumph. Yamauchi is currently 58. He became president of Nintendo in 1999.

MTV and GT Interactive Software have entered into a global multimedia arrangement, whereby the company will publish several titles based on some of the network's best-known properties including *Beavis and Butt-Head* and *Ace Ventura* for the PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and Sega platforms. The first game under the agreement will be released in 1998.



"We are very excited to enter into the agreement with MTV, as their programs continue to cultivate immense followings among viewers throughout the world," said Holly Newman, VP of marketing for GT Interactive. "We look forward to combining these high-profile, young-adult properties with the cutting-edge technology that GT is known for, to bring a new level of interactive entertainment to the gaming community."

Nintendo is planning on taking full advantage of their revolutionary new Rumble Pak accessory. The accessory gives you direct feedback through your controller so you can feel hits, speed boosts and other stimuli while playing your favorite N64 games.

Nintendo Chairman Howard Lincoln recently unveiled a new plan that will provide more support to third-party publishers and gave technical instructions on how to design software for the Rumble Pak.

Recently Nintendo announced that the Rumble Pak will be

compatible with GoldenEye: 007 and Star Fox 64. EGM has also learned that Nintendo will be re-releasing Mario 64 and WaveRace 64 in Japan only to take advantage of the Rumble Pak. Nintendo is also considering a re-release of Mario Kart 64 over here to use the Pak. Some other titles that are set to use the Pak include Interplay's *ClayFighter 63 1/3*, Paradigm's *Aerofighters Assault*, GT Interactive's *Wild Choppers*, Acclaim's *Extreme G*, Midway's *Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey 2* and THQ's *WCW vs. nWo: World Tour*.



Mission: Impossible, left, and **Zelda 64**, right, are two games that would benefit from the Rumble Pak feature. This device gives you more for your money.



Westing. Some other titles we feel would make sense for the Pak include Nintendo's *Zelda 64*, *Earthbound 64*, *F-Zero 64*, *Donkey Kong 64*, *Ocean's Mission Impossible*, *Midway's San Francisco Rush* and *Hudson's Bomberman 64*.

This is one cool device that plenty of developers will take advantage of even more as they get used to programming for it.

SONY SHAKEN NOT STIRRED

Forced-Feedback Feature On Hold

Sony Computer Entertainment of America has encountered some legal issues stemming from the forced-feedback feature on their new Sony dual-analog controller. A check with the United States Patent office shows that two inventors from Atari Games have a patent on this type of technology.

They applied for the patent in March of 1991. Some were suggesting that Nintendo was giving Sony the go-ahead over

the forced-feedback issue. Sony had big plans for the forced-feedback controller. Some reports suggest they wanted to pack it in with every new PlayStation system starting this Christmas. That would have meant manufacturing 1 million-plus controllers and that wouldn't have been manageable. So for now the forced-feedback feature won't be a part of the dual-analog controller. By all accounts, the dual-analog controllers in Japan will still utilize the feature.



The forced-feedback option will not be utilized in the U.S., Canada or Europe, according to Sony officials.

POWER and PERFORMANCE

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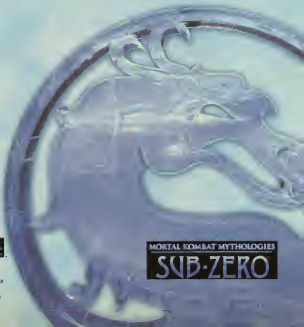


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Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero. Arriving October nineteen ninety-seven.

Soon you'll meet
the root of our evil.



MIDWAY



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MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES

SUB-ZERO

SEGA'S SECRET SYSTEM

DEVELOPERS TO GET BLACK BELT STATIONS

Sega has been busy in recent months, but not from working on games for the ill-fated Saturn 32-Bit gaming system. They have been working behind the scenes getting their fourth-generation console system specs finalized.

Sega's official line is no comment, and they say they aren't working on any new system.

But our sources within Sega and in the third-party development community are telling a different story. Recently they confirmed that Sega intends on proceeding with the Black Belt 64-Bit system.

This is the system that was developed in the U.S. by engineers from SegaSoft, Microsoft and 3DFX. Sega officials over here decided

not to use Sega of Japan's Japanese-developed prototype code-named Durat.

"Sega's Japanese OS team has an awful history of developing poor operating code for Sega platforms. When Sega came to review the two prototype machines side-by-side, they were not looking to see which machine had more raw horsepower. They wanted to see which system could load up the games the quickest, and the Black Belt was that machine, according to Sega sources.

The Black Belt's operating system was developed by Microsoft and insiders are boasting that this will let developers gain easy access to many of the machine's graphics and audio

functions, largely removing the problems that plagued the developer-unfriendly Saturn. A U.S.-designed operating system will also have the benefit of being in English, therefore solving the problem that developers encountered when translating Japanese operating manuals. Developers were given a glimpse of the new machine and its new capabilities at the recent E3 show held in Atlanta. At that time, the developers were told that the first development systems would be sent out within two months.

We'll be updating you on this story as developments take place. If you want more information as we get it, please visit our Web site at: www.videogamespot.com.

Nintendo is trying to get into the arcade business through the back door. Maybe that's because arcade operators have had several issues with Nintendo over the years. Recently in Japan Sega announced its Arcok 64 system. The system is basically a retrofitted Nintendo 64 board with addi-



tional sound capabilities that all coin-op titles have. The system is currently in its development stages. Some third-party developers could make their N64 games available first in the arcades and then bring them out for the home.

GT Interactive has purchased SingleTrac Entertainment, makers of some of the hottest-selling PlayStation titles of all time, including Warhawk, Twisted Metal and Twisted Metal 2. SingleTrac is one of the most well-respected software development houses in the industry and GT Interactive is positioning itself as one of the leading next-generation software publishers. SingleTrac will develop three to four titles per year for the Nintendo 64, the PlayStation and the PC. The first title to be published by GT Interactive will be Crystal Depth for the Sony PlayStation. Other titles will follow.

N64 SECRET SCREEN EXPOSED

Coming up with original concepts and ideas is no easy feat. But for Dane Golden, inventor of the Game Handler joystick and assorted other gaming games and gadgets, inventing innovative peripherals is a piece of cake. Finding a good corporate partner to work with him on his ideas has been more of a challenge.

Golden recently showed us his latest creation: a miniscreen that plugs into the port on the bottom of the Nintendo 64 controller and will allow you to select plays in sports games all the while hiding your strategy from your opponents.

"This idea goes back to the Game Handler days. My NES, Super NES days, that's when I came up with the concept, but I had to wait until the game became more sophisticated and could do multitasking," Golden said.

By Tom Hall, 11/24/95

PlayStations, but Nintendo had the built-in port in their controller. They have the 8-Bit bus on the bottom of their controllers for their memory cards. The screen on your controller is so you can see the info on screen privately."

Golden is hoping to sell his device for around \$100.

get it packed in as an added value item with a sports title. According to Golden, his brother never to cheat at football.

He only did it during

the games. He said he'd sneak a peek as I picked up the joystick. That's how I came up with the idea.

Now here's our secret system right in front of you and everyone else won't be able to see it.

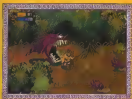
The screen allows you to view your stats in real time. It's not only good for sports games but for strategy games, too. It's a great idea.

Your super secret screen will guard against wandering eyes.



**IF BATTLING THE
CYCLOPS AND THE
FOUR-HEADED HYDRA
ISN'T FUN ENOUGH,
YOU CAN ALWAYS
GO TO HADES.**





← In addition to all the other freaky creatures, you'll have to battle a boss. Which is anything but a bore.

Zeus not only has to conquer Hades, but also conquer the heart of Atlanta. (A Herculean task, indeed.) →



In *Herc's Adventures*, unlike life, to have a happy ending, you'll have to wind up in hell. After all, that's where you must duel with Hades, god of the underworld, to save civilization.

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER. You'll go into battle as one of three heroic, mythological characters, each one with unique powers: Hercules possesses super strength. Atlanta has lightning speed. And, Jason - savvy street smarts.

WEIRD WEAPONS. Sure, you get the usual arrows, slingshots and swords. But,

you can also arm yourself with ray guns, houses, sheep and inflatable cows. **EVEN WEIRDER BAD GUYS.**

Freaky weapons are perfect for fighting even freakier enemies: The four-headed Hydra, snake-haired Medusa, sword-swinging skeletons, crazy clowns, nasty Martians and more. *GamePro* says "Challenging bosses, humorous anecdotes, and gigantic landscapes - *Herc's* has it all." In the end, it's up to you to save the world in this crazy twist on Greek mythology. And, if you fail? Well, at least you'll die laughing.



← So many Martians, so little time! And, to make matters worse, they've got Jason surrounded with ray guns.

Unfortunately for Atlanta, the Cyclops has a huge appetite for destruction. Not to mention beautiful women. →



<http://www.lucasarts.com>

September 1997

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

- 5** **Name of Game**
Publisher's Name
- ↑ **Editors' Choice Award** ↓
- ≡ **Consecutive Months On The Chart**
- Rank Number



The NFL's first puzzle game, Tetrisphere, is an office favorite for two-player duels.



MLB '98 is the most entertaining baseball game on the PlayStation.



Warcraft II for the Saturn (and PC) is a real feel-of-the-back-of-the-neck PC strategy game.

OVERALL

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1 | 3 | Star Fox⁶⁴
Nintendo 64/Nintendo | |
| 2 | 4 | Warcraft II
Saturn/Electronic Arts | |
| 3 | 8 | MLB '98
PlayStation/SCA | |
| 4 | 1 | Disney's Hercules
PlayStation/Virgin | |
| 5 | 5 | Tetrisphere
Nintendo 64/Nintendo | |
| 6 | 6 | Albert Odyssey
Saturn/Working Designs | |
| 7 | 2 | Int. Superstar Soccer
Nintendo 64/Konami | |
| 8 | 1 | W.S. Baseball '98
Saturn/Sega | |
| 9 | 9 | Clock Tower
PlayStation/SCA | |
| 10 | 1 | Ace Combat 2
PlayStation/Namco | |

PLAYSTATION

- | | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 1 | MLB '98
SCA | |
| 2 | 1 | Disney's Hercules
Virgin | |
| 3 | 1 | Clock Tower
SCA | |
| 4 | 1 | Ace Combat 2
Namco | |
| 5 | 1 | Felony 11-79
SCA | |
| 6 | 5 | Poy Poy
Namco | |
| 7 | 1 | Ogre Battle
Atlus | |
| 8 | 1 | RayStorm
Spex Games | |
| 9 | 2 | Wild Arms
SCA | |
| 10 | 8 | Tekken 2
Namco | |

NINTENDO 64

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|--|
| 1 | 3 | Star Fox⁶⁴
Nintendo | |
| 2 | 1 | Tetrisphere
Nintendo | |
| 3 | 2 | Int. Superstar Soccer
Konami | |
| 4 | 4 | Blast Corps
Nintendo | |
| 5 | 2 | Mario Kart⁶⁴
Nintendo | |
| 6 | 8 | Wave Race⁶⁴
Nintendo | |
| 7 | 8 | Super Mario⁶⁴
Nintendo | |
| 8 | 3 | Doom⁶⁴
Midway | |
| 9 | 2 | Turok: DH
Acclaim | |
| 10 | 5 | NBA Hangtime
Midway | |

SATURN

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1 | 1 | Warcraft II
Electronic Arts | |
| 2 | 1 | Albert Odyssey
Working Designs | |
| 3 | 1 | W.S. Baseball '98
Sega | |
| 4 | 1 | Fighters Megamix
Sega | |
| 5 | 8 | SF Alpha 2
Capcom | |
| 6 | 4 | Andretti Racing
Electronic Arts | |
| 7 | 2 | Super Puzzle Fighter II
Capcom | |
| 8 | 8 | Command & Conquer
Westwood Studios | |
| 9 | 1 | Shining the Holy Ark
Sega | |
| 10 | 2 | Pandemonium
Crystal Dynamics | |

THE

SUSHI-X FILES

No. 6

Some things are better left unsaid...
that is, UNTIL NOW!!!

CHIMPS FOUND ROCKIN'

CHIMPS TO DO SOUNDTRACK
FOR STUDIO Q'S NEXT
BIG GAMEROCKING
CHIMPS!

The Chimps always have a jam session before every show. Their manager Tommy Dakota mentions: "To them it's more about the music than anything else."



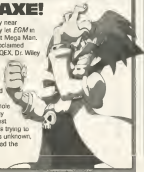
Chimps with James © 1999 Zentech

Needless to say when the Sushi-X Files news team heard about this, we all jumped around a lot and threw things (no, not our feces). The Chimps, the newest and rockiest band around, is a group of apes—that's right, no humans here, just four honest-to-goodness chimps! Because of their recent comeback tour, Studio Q, maker of fine video games, has chosen the band to do the soundtrack for their next PlayStation title. Russ Pullman, enhancer of production, had this to say about the recent decision: "We've had big name acts before, but nobody as big as this, it only seemed natural to have The Chimps do the music for our new game." When asked what the future held for The Chimps, their manager, Tommy Dakota, said, "At this point it's hard to tell. They could go on to be the next big thing in the music industry, or they could just go back to their respective zoos." Dakota added that the entire situation is wonderful for everyone involved. "The world gets great music, I get my salary and The Chimps get their bonuses." The Chimps had no comment. Reports suggest that this recent endeavor could push The Chimps to the top of the charts.

DR. WILEY PIKED?

LONG-TIME MEGA-JERK
GETS THE AXE!

An inside source from a company near Capcom's headquarters recently let EGM in on some good and bad news about Mega Man. According to Teddy Brown, self-proclaimed chairman of special marketing for QEX, Dr. Wiley (who Capcom hired to destroy Mega Man but failed) has been fired. Brown went on to say, "It's like he had a million tries but he never did it. I think they just got fed up with him." EGM contacted Dr. Wiley for comment as well: "The whole incident is rousing but a conspiracy against me! At least give me one last chance, mein Gott! Why Capcom is trying to reportedly take down Mega Man is unknown, but according to Brown they've hired the Yakuza to "get the job done right."



LARA'S GAMBLING SCENES...

LARA
THROWS
DOWN HER
CARDSTHIS IS
NO JOKE!

Now we're not saying that you should go out and gamble (even if you could get your hands on a deck of these cards), but if there's one video game female that deserves to have her face plastered all over the place, it's Eidos' very own Lara Croft. Let's face it, she is the sexiest lady around with two guns. Seriously though, these playing cards were just one of the many goodies handed out at the recent E! show.

"PEOPLE WILL HATE YOU, STEVE, IF YOU'RE TOO STINGY."

Guess what game the quote above is from and get absolutely nothing from us, but win the respect of your neighborhood chums (and your crazy Uncle Eddie).

STRANGE RESPONSES!

HERE'S WHAT YOU HAD US SAY:

It's been a couple of issues, so we thought we'd print a couple of the responses to our "Ed: A Day in the Life" segment. Most of them used foul language, so we couldn't print more of them, and 90 percent of them were just plain strange. Here's two we thought captured the scene:



• Response #1 from Albert Yu, Elmwood Park, NJ:

Ed: Are you understand the gas politic if you're all out of what I just said?

• Response #2 from

Woodside, CA:
Ed: I think of these kind of responses and we're saying we're going to give people these articles to read.

• Response #1 from Peter Nimmeier, Woodside, CA:
Shawn: That's the last time you try to steal my godly cheese sandwich, period.



• Response #1 from Albert Yu, Elmwood Park, NJ:

Shawn: Now this is a man who had to peel!

• Response #2 from Peter Nimmeier, Woodside, CA:

Shawn: That's the last time you try to steal my godly cheese sandwich, period.

• Response #1 from Albert Yu, Elmwood Park, NJ:

Ed: The moral is: Although holding it in will make you feel better later, don't.

• Response #2 from Peter Nimmeier, Woodside, CA:

Ed: Fools. I only cause trouble to drive them insane. That is why I am in control. They sure do make a swell cheese sandwich.

Dog and Bug

By Josef P. Richter



Because of the response we received on Josef P. Richter's comic a couple issues ago, we thought we'd give him another stab at fame. Who knows what might happen if this whole Dog and Bug thing catches on? Perhaps Josef can finally move from Austria to America so he can eat hamburgers and wear tie jeans. We'll see.

THINGS THAT AREN'T GOOD

Last month it was what's hot @ EGM, this month it's what's...

NOT @ EGM

- 1 Work:** This is a no-brainer. We do have the coolest jobs in the world, but...
- 2 Hot Weather:** How do the gods expect us to play soccer? It's too hot outside!
- 3 Sunburn:** All of this fun in the sun is great until the peeling starts.
- 4 Fireworks:** Fun at first, but then a bottlerocket singed Shoe's eyebrows!
- 5 Editorial Deadlines:** When do these actually take place again?
- 6 Batteries:** Gadgets and Rumble Paks are cool, but batteries get to be pricey.
- 7 Early Mornings:** It'd be alright if we weren't up all night long deathmatchin'.
- 8 Water Polo:** Supposedly a sport for anyone who likes to play video games.
- 9 Tamagotchis:** Sure we kind of like 'em and all, but they're always beepin'.
- 10 Vacations:** I'm the EGM editor in chief. I've snuck this one past my workers!

COOL BADGE!

IMPRESS YOUR FRIENDS WITH THIS BADGE:

Because we care so much about our readers, we just wanted to give you a little something that will last a lifetime. So here it is, an official TM THE COOLEST LEADER OF EGM AROUND* badge. Wear this gear proudly little dude.



*Not our fault if you cut at public yourself with the scissors or safety pin!

N64+CF 63 1/3

(The
Ultimate
Combo)

Also available
Clay Fighter: Extreme



"...more variety than any
other N64 game to date."
—Nintendo Power

Sorry, we don't have any guys with 3-letter names like "Ryu" or "Ken." Also, none of us are named after some lame-o game developer.

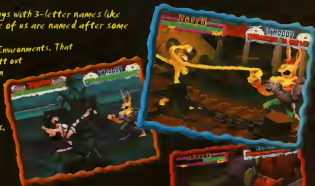
We got cool 3D Breakthrough Environments. That means I can toss your sorry butt out of a window and then kick it again on the other side.

We have 12 kick-ass clay fighters, 3D environments, and free-floating camera angles. What do the others got?

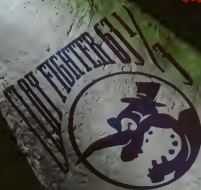
We don't have any palette-swapped ninjas, no boring humans neither.

We have secret characters so famous they can't be named due to a strict licensee gag order.

There ain't any side-scrolling 2D backgrounds (Claymodo is 3D). Yeah, and no corner traps either.



COMING
IN
SEPTEMBER



Interplay
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www.interplay.com

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- **Nintendo Holds 64DD Until 1998 E***
- **Dural Also Nowhere to be Found**
- **Konami Sets Sights on the Top**
- **PlayStation 2 (Type C) to be at TGS**
- **Tekken 3—First PS2 Compatible Title**
- **PS64 with DVD out in 2000**

Hello all you happy people. It is I, Q-hollo, the fastest, most hidden contra-weasin', game conspiracy-revealin' covert document-copin', security camera-avoidin', video game secret agent in all the land. Today, the Q-crow and I have a full plate of gaming gossip to dish out to you Q-followers out there, so sit back, relax and listen to the latest gaming gossip the Q-Man is prochin'.

One of the biggest surprises at E* was Nintendo's announcement that they would not be showing the 64DD on the show floor. Nintendo held a press conference a day before the show to preview their N64 games, and it was there that Nintendo decided to alert the press (the Q snuck in through the back door) that the 64DD would have its first US showing at the 1998 E* show (also in Atlanta). Even though the unit was displayed in all its glory at last year's Shoshinko Expo (November 1996) and even though development of the unit has been complete for months and software development is proceeding swimmingly, the big N decided to instead focus on core games and lowering their licensing fees to N64 developers (as predicted in last month's E* Mania). Now, although the non-appearance of the 64DD did burn out some show attendees, it had an even more profound effect on Nintendo's competitors. From what we hear, Nintendo's conservative showing at E* prompted Sega and Sony to withhold any official announcements of future hardware projects (namely, the Dural and Type C).

At the Sega booth, the Dural was nowhere to be found (nor was the Saturn version of VF3 for that matter). As I stated before, Sega was nmed and ready to show their 64-Bit console at the show if one of their major competitors unleashed a new upgrade/system. Since Nintendo decided to hold off their 64DD showing until next year, Sega didn't have to show the Dural to combat the N64 upgrade. However, we hear rumblings that Sega was performing some hardcore wining and dining on potential Dural developers behind closed doors. Some of the courtiers include: Id Software (Quake 2, Trinity), Epic Megagame (Lunar) and reportedly Capcom of Japan (SFIII, Vampire Savior). Supposedly, NEC's Power VR chipset went out over 3DX as the chipmaker of choice for the Dural, and Sega is putting the finishing touches on the sound hardware. The console is still on schedule for a Christmas 1998 release in Japan (with a port of Sega's Model 3-powered Super GT as the big launch title), and the Dural sports a 12-speed CD drive and 8 Megabytes of RAM (although even more RAM is a possibility). Other Model 3 games in development for Sega's 64-Bit system include: Le Mans 24, VF3, Sega Rally 2, and Motor Racer (a Road Rash-like motorcycle game). A demo of Dural (along with the Saturn version of VF3) is due to be shown at the upcoming Fall Tokyo Game Show in Chiba, Japan. Sega will also show off their new Saturn 4-Meg RAM upgrade at the TGS. Capcom is using the RAM upgrade to develop arcade-perfect versions of Vampire Savior, X-Men vs. Street Fighter, Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter and Street Fighter III. Also due to be shown at the September TGS show is SNK's new Hyper Neo-Geo 64 arcade system/games console. Two NING 64 games have been announced (Samurai Spirits 84 and Round Trip RV) and even more games are in development.

In Konami news, the big K is currently on the comeback trail and is poised to rise back to their previous position as the No. 1 third-party developer with a vengeance. The Japanese giant has gone back to their roots to produce such stand-out titles as Castlevania: Symphony of the Night, Soulknot and, of course, the mighty Metal Gear Solid (which stole the E* show in Q-Mania's opinion) which will be playable at the TGS show...Big Joy! Other games said to be in development include: Contra 64 for the N64, Battle Dancers (a 3-D fighting game for the N64), Dead Eye for the PlayStation (a conversion of the upcoming coin-op gun game) and, believe it or not, a PlayStation sequel to the old NES game The Adventures of Bayou Billy (see figure). In other software news, Nintendo of Japan's top-secret 3-D fighting game (which, for the record, was first reported in the June installment of Q-Mania) for the N64 should make an appearance at the upcoming (November 1997) Famcom Space World show in Chiba, Japan. According to Terry Aki (EGM's Japanese supermouth), the fighting game will not feature trademark Nintendo characters, but will instead be a serious one-on-one fighter in the vein of Tekken, Soul Edge/Soul Blade and VF. The game is due out sometime in '98. On the hardware side, news of Nintendo's 32-Bit Atlantis coin handheld (yes, didn't someone say that system would already be out by now?) is surfacing again. Info on the unit is thin on the ground, but we hear that Nintendo should launch the unit within the next 18 months to protect their monopoly of the handheld market.

Over in Sony land, Terry Aki claims that Sony plans to show their Type C PlayStation (said to be called the PlayStation 2) at the TGS in Japan. The stand-alone PS2 is now said to feature a full 8 Megabytes of RAM (up from 4 Megs in the PS), and the PS plug-in will be a 4-Meg module. As stated months ago in Quartermania, the Type C has actually existed for years (the original PlayStation specification included a quad-speed drive and 8 Megs of RAM, but production costs drove the final spec down to 4 Megs and a dual-speed drive). Although I can't absolutely guarantee Sony will release the Type C (remember, PlayStationers are selling quite well at the moment), I do know for a fact that many games in development are Type C compatible, several inside sources swear Tekken 3 is the first Type C game (in fact, Namco has never officially denied T3 will be compatible with a PS upgrade) and finally, that the Type C project is REAL...then again, the proof is in the pudding, right? ...Sony take!

In more Sony news, Terry Aki went behind enemy lines and has confirmed previous reports of a DVD drive included in the PlayStation 64. The PS64 is due out in late 1999 in Japan and will launch in the States around the turn of the century. Apparently, Sony is going out with the development of their new console. Now that Sony has established themselves as a big-time player in the video game industry, they are targeting the console to be a cornerstone of Sony's corporate lineup for the new millennium. In other words, the PS was a home run for Sony as they were just establishing themselves. This time around, Sony wants to obliterate any and all foreseeable competitors and totally dominate the market. The PlayStation 64 is targeted to be that grand-slam product and with online capabilities, a DVD player built in and supercharged 64-Bit technology, it looks like Sony could be unstoppable. On that fine note, we conclude this installment of Q-Mania. Tune in next month where PE reveal a BIG surprise. Heh, eh...well then, remember these words of wisdom: People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones...

-THE Q

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SOME KILL FOR GLORY.
YOU KILL FOR **POWER.**

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**"A very cool
3-D shooter!"**

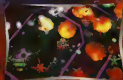
- PSExtreme

**"Hold on for two-fisted
action in a wild new
PlayStation shooter!"**

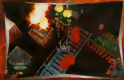
- Next Generation Online



18 DARING CLASSES OF DRIFTERS each one more
deceitful than the last.



THE ULTIMATE COMBAT CHALLENGE you must first
evade the enemy — then take over their bodies and
use their powers to crush your deadliest opponent.



3-D development with FULL 360° ATTACK MOBILITY.

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Defeat your enemies with your Power Sword.

Real-time 3-D landscapes and special effects are cool when you're protecting Mr. Olympus from a fire-breathing Titan attack.



Survive the Hero Training Gauntlet.



Watch out for snake-headed Medusa and her Runaway Power Jut.



Slay multiple heads as you face the vicious Hydra.



Take care or the Cyclops will get you.

Includes special five-color disc.



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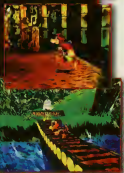
PROTOS

Here's proof that EGM brings you the first look at the newest of the new games. The following section contains everything from cut scenes to screen shots for titles in early development. Watch for updates in future Protos and more extensive coverage in upcoming Next Waves.

Banjo-Kazooie



Nintendo's top-secret project before E³, known only under its codename "Dream," was kindly unveiled to the public for the first time at E³ as Banjo-Kazooie. Why the weird name? Well, Banjo, the main character, is a honey bear out to save his girlfriend Piccolo from a giant who kidnapped her. Kazooie is his sidekick, a bird-Created Breegull who hangs out in Banjo's backpack. The game looks very similar to Mario 64, with a 3-D world packed with lush environments and a multitude of enemies. There are 30 areas in all, and the object is to collect missing puzzle pieces that will somehow enable the duo to rescue Banjo's girl. Like Mario, Banjo's characters have a variety of moves they can pull off, making for a (hopefully) long-lasting play experience. Banjo is due out this November.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
NINTENDO 64	November
	Adventure
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Nintendo	N/A
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1	N/A



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME	
Rare	NINTENDO 64	Adventure	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE	% COMPLETE
December	1	N/A	N/A

Strangely enough, Nintendo's other "top-secret" game at E³ didn't seem all that different from the first one. Conker's Quest is yet another action/adventure game (this time perhaps a little bit more on the action side) that takes place in a fully 3-D world, similar to Mario 64. In this, Rare's

first-ever self-published title (although still distributed by Nintendo), Conker the squirrel and Bert the chipmunk set out to recover housewarming presents that were stolen by a gang of moles and spread out over four worlds. The beauty of Conker's Quest, aside from the amazing (even if not entirely original) graphics, is in the lifelike movements and actions of the characters, which were designed with an advanced AI engine to mimic reality. It might sound like PR hubbly, but if you've seen the game in motion, you'd be amazed at how true-to-life the characters' inner moans and utterances are. Conker's Quest is due out this December, so expect a more in-depth preview in the coming months.



CONKER'S QUEST

F1 POLE 64 POSITION

*Pulse-pounding
Formula 1
racing action
is coming to
the N64...*

...this October!

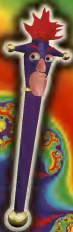
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Descend into the all new psychotic world of Pandemonium 2 and twist reality inside out. Explore a whacked-out psychedelic landscape with Nikki's insane double jump—then dominate with Fargus' maniacal attacks by hurling his viper-tongued side-kick Sid for skull crushing good times. Navigate the undulating 3D hyper-kinetic backgrounds 'till it turns your brain to puddin'. Hey...it's a twisted new world of furious gameplay that'll devour you before you truly understand it. So have a good trip.



Pilot a giant mech through warped 3D tunnels.



Taste the pulse of the original soundtrack and sound effects.

Nikki—equipped with powers



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Pandemonium 2

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Pandemonium 2



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PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	TITLE	
Sega			Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE	% COMPLETE	
November	TBD	CD-ROM	N/A	

Instead of bringing out a fully 3-D Sonic platform game, Sega has opted to make Sonic R, a game that combines both the racing and action genres. Sonic R's wild tracks are set in a 3-D world. If you make a mistake while racing, you will often find yourself in the middle of a lake or on the wrong side of a ledge. Although it won't automatically cost you the game, it does cost you precious seconds as you trudge back to the course. In addition to having to make a mad dash for the finish line, there's also plenty of enemies hidden throughout the game. There are five different game modes and four different courses, including a fifth hidden level. Sounds good. Now if only Sega would release a true 3-D Sonic platform game.



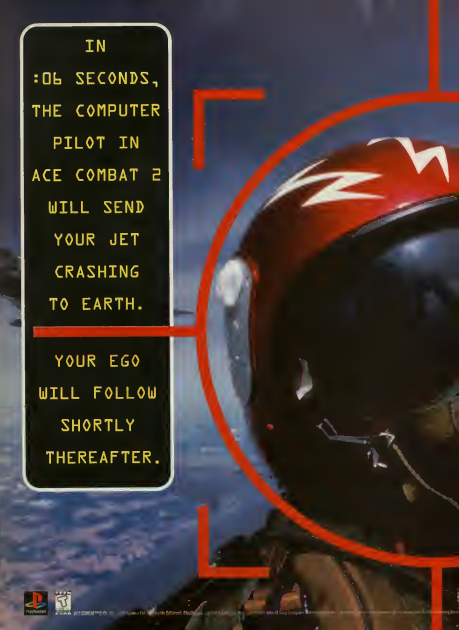
SONIC R



Formerly disguised as the 3-D sequel to Rock 'N' Roll Racing, Red Asphalt has taken on a personality all its own. Set in the standard post-apocalyptic future, Red Asphalt combines elements of racing and carnage to deliver a game similar in design to Crash 'N' Burn. There are many different tracks, and after winning a race, you are awarded money to upgrade your vehicle. With this, new weapons can be added, or more powerful ones can be purchased. Set for a December release, Road Warrior wanna-bees might have something to look forward to this holiday season.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
Publisher	Interplay
Size	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1 or 2	N/A

RED ASPHALT



IN
:06 SECONDS,
THE COMPUTER
PILOT IN
ACE COMBAT 2
WILL SEND
YOUR JET
CRASHING
TO EARTH.

YOUR EGO
WILL FOLLOW
SHORTLY
THEREAFTER.





Uh-oh.

AGECOMBAT 2

SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE

PROTOS



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Konami		 PlayStation	Action/Adv	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
1st Qtr. '98	1	CD-ROM	N/A	

At E3, Konami showed off a six-minute video of gameplay from their upcoming spy-schoon thriller, *Metal Gear Solid* for the PlayStation. Set up like a movie trailer, the video demonstrated various aspects of MGS's game play, from the multiple camera angles, to the various weapons and gadgets Solid Snake can utilize. The most amazing part of the video (and the one that keeps us viewing it over and over again) is how much attention to detail KCET put into each area of the game. Everything that made the NES game so amazing has been perfectly reproduced in 3-D, from the remote-control rockets (which can now be viewed from a first-person perspective) to the plastic explosives (which shake entire rooms when set off), and the graphics are simply breathtaking. We'll be back with a more in-depth preview of MGS in coming months, so keep an eye out for it—this is definitely one to watch for.



Metal Gear Solid



It is still pretty early for information on *Mortal Kombat 4*. As of press time, we see about one week from the expected test release of the game, and Ed Boon is really keeping this one under wraps. Here's what we know so far: Returning from previous MKs are Raiden, Sonya, Liu Kang, Sub-Zero and Scorpion. New to the cast (see side panel of art) is Quan Chi, who also appears in the new *Mortal Kombat* movie *Annihilation*. The rest of the characters are still shrouded in mystery. The new ability found in MK4 has to do with weapons. Every character has his or her own weapons, and those weapons can be knocked out of his or her hands, picked up and used against its owner. It is still unclear how Boon (there are many people on the MK4 team, but Boon still does the bulk of the programming) will give us the feel of the previous MKs in a 3-D graphics style, however this game looks a bit darker than the sometimes colorful and "goofy" feel of MK3. This is a good thing for the fans of MK1 and 2, and those of us who thought MK3 was a little bit watered down.

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Midway		 Arcade Sticks	Fighting	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr. '97	1 or 2	2msHW	N/A	



MORTAL 4 KOMBAT

Treasures of the Deep



Explore the depths of the sea as you search the bottom of the ocean in pursuit of your riches and hidden lost and hidden treasures. Your adventure takes you from the peaks of the shark-infested waters of the Great Barrier Reef to the depths of the Murian trenches. The game is totally 3-D, and attempts to re-create a complete oceanic environment. Sharks, jellyfish, schools of fish all swim around, some harmlessly, while others are looking for lunch. Each mission has a goal, and that might consist of finding anything from a sword to diffusing a nuclear warhead.

There are plenty of enemies such as eels, great white sharks and bogmen, but those can be taken care of with advanced weapons (such as missiles and torpedoes) that can be bought with your treasure. This game is a big departure for Namco, and for the action 3-D genre in general.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	FRANCHISE	
Namco		 PlayStation	Adventure	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
September	1	CD-ROM	N/A	

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	1st Qtr. '98
	THREE
Adventure	
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Namco	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1	N/A



Namco recently announced plans to release a new 2 1/2-D platformer for the PlayStation in Japan called Klonoa. Door to Phantasy, and not two weeks later, it was playable at E. The game plays similar to Pandemonium or Spidey, with (mostly) 2-D play on 3-D polygonal stages, and the graphics are, for the most part, gorgeous. There are numerous lighting effects used, backgrounds with several layers of parallax, and quite a bit of animation on each character in the game. The only story we have so far is that the main character, Klonoa, and his sidekick are on a search for special crystals that are scattered about the game's 25+ stages. We'll have more on this one soon!



KLONOA

ACECOMBAT 2

SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE



- The most realistic dogfights ever created for the PlayStation™ game console.
- Total 3-D polygon environment - fly freely and unleash your arsenal with reckless abandon.
- Advanced artificial intelligence - cunning and calculating enemy pilots.
- 30 formidable missions - nearly double the missions of Air Combat.
- Awesome mission debriefings - dynamic diagrams and moving maps for surgical strikes.
- Secret planes and hidden missions - the better you fly, the more you'll reveal.

POWERED BY
namco



PROTOS

Point Blank

One of our favorite arcade shooters is making a transition to the home consoles. Point Blank is a light gun shooter that strays from the traditional formula of shoot-the-bad-guy-don't-shoot-the-good-guy. The game takes you through a series of stages, each is different from the other. Your targets range from bull's-eyes to pop-up cardboard targets to animals. Every

level delivers the targets in a unique way, giving the game more replay value than others of its kind. Two-player Modes have you competing to outscore your opponents.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	GENRE	
Namco		PlayStation	Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
1st Qtr. '98	1 or 2	CD-ROM	N/A	



FROGGER

This was a pleasant surprise at E3 (but it really shouldn't have been since retro gaming is all the rage). Basically, this is an updated version of the classic, amphibious arcade game with a few new twists. One mode simply features Frogger's gameplay with 3-D polygonal graphics and over 50 different levels. What's cool is that up to four players can play simultaneously, turning Frogger into a competitive race to the finish. An all-new Play Mode provides an action/puzzle-type twist to the game as you hop around the level opening new areas and finding power-ups (such as feet-stealing toad, power jump and croak). Those wanting to leap back into arcade's past should be ready to jump into Frogger.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
PlayStation	October
	GENRE
	Action
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Hasbro	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1-4	N/A



FORSAKEN

Acclaim makes it clear that Forsaken is inspired by Descent. This 12-level title sends you through the winding interior of a futuristic station—along

with a handy 3-D map, so you won't get hopelessly lost. Forsaken is a much genre game than Descent; expect to see bloody, severed limbs floating in the null gravity after you take out an enemy. When Acclaim brought the game to our offices for a second look, we got to see how

a few of its puzzle work. One, for instance, has you trapped between two giant fans. You need to blast one fan and send its blades into the other to escape. That's good stuff!

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	GENRE	
Acclaim		PlayStation	Shooter	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
1st Qtr. '98	1 or 2	CD-ROM	40%	





SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	September
PUBLISHER	THEME
T*HQ	Racing
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
	% COMPLETE
	N/A

With the horde of racing games pouring onto store shelves, it's refreshing to find one that is attempting to deliver something a little different. T*HQ's Bravo Air Race features air races between 11 different aircraft from various time periods. For example, some of the planes consist of the Stealth Bomber and various types of bi-planes. There are seven different courses available, each rendered in 3-D. They take place in various locations such as canyons and even cities (I guess safety isn't a concern). The game will feature realistic flight and speed mechanics, giving the game an aura of realism. Beginners should fear not of this interesting racing title, as Air Race will have various features (such as an autopilot) to help virgin pilots even their wings. Due out in September, Air Race is hoping to bring racing games to new heights.

BRAVO AIR RACE



PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
SCEA	 PlayStation	Music Sim
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
November	1	CD-ROM
		% COMPLETE
		N/A

One of the biggest cult sensations in Japan is about to be released in the U.S. this fall. PaRappa the Rapper is a young hip-hop hero who must rap his way through several adventures. You have to help PaRappa learn kung fu, earn a driver's license, bake a cake and even out in line to get to a public toilet faster. Along the top of the screen, on icon skins along a meter filled with joycon commands. You successfully advance through each stage by pressing the correct keys at the right time. It sounds idiotic and



simple, but it's the delivery that makes PaRappa such an unforgettable title. The humor, the music and the cartoon Colorform-like worlds are all like nothing you've seen before. Stay tuned to find out why EGM is so excited about this game.



PaRappa THE RAPPER

LOOK OUT!





PUBLISHER		SYSTEM		TITLE	
BCEA		PlayStation		RPG	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE	% COMPLETE		
1st Qtr '98	1	CD-ROM	N/A		

Sony recently announced their plans to port over Square's latest role-playing game from Japan, Final Fantasy Tactics, early next year. Unlike Final Fantasy VII, which is a true RPG, Tactics is what is known as a "simulation/RPG" because of its strategy-oriented gameplay (which is similar to Konami's Vandal Hearts). Unlike Vandal Hearts, however, FFT has a much more in-depth play system. There are various components that add to the game, such as the ability to switch Jobs and Abilities (like character classes and their spells and special techniques), and machine fighting (with a variation of Final Fantasy's Active Battle System). Oh, and did somebody say Cloud? You'll just have to wait and see.



FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM		TITLE	
T.H.Q.		PlayStation		Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE	% COMPLETE		
October	1	CD-ROM	N/A		

Based on the Japanese anime, Ghost in the Shell is a 3-D action game that shows deftly precise. You control a tank that resembles a bug (legs and all) in a 3-D environment. This vehicle can scale buildings and crawl on just about every surface, making the game an interesting one to play. Different weapons such as missiles, machine guns and bombs enable you to mow down enemies that consist of other tanks, soldiers and the obligatory Boss creatures. Fans of the anime and of mechs in general should watch out for this one.



Ghost in the Shell

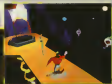
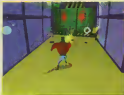
SYSTEM		RELEASE DATE	
PlayStation		September	
Publisher		Title	
Acclaim		Action	
Players		Size	
1-4		CD-ROM	
% Complete		N/A	



Fantastic Four is still in its early stages of development, but the game is very playable. This rendition of the popular comic book allows control of any of the Fantastic Four members in this side-scrolling, Final Fight-like game. As you walk around, kicking, punching and using special weapons at your enemies, the 3-D environment rotates and scrolls to outline your character's path. You can also walk into the fore and backgrounds of the screen, adding depth to the action.



Fantastic Four



Blasto's earning notoriety for three reasons: it's the first game developed in-house out of Sony's Foster City, Calif., studio; funny

guy Phil Hartman voices the title character; and it packs a developer's wish list of fancy tricks, including asynchronous background loading, software mip-mapping and other buzz word effects—all while running in hi-res at 30 frames per second. Oh, and Sony's hyping the heck out of this character-driven 3-D action game, too. As Captain Blasto, slayers exterminate aliens,



solve puzzles and leap from platform to platform in eight huge environments, including a desert, a swamp, a spaceport, a desert and a swamp. Besides his normal moves, Blasto will be able to fly, with a rocket and a jet pack. (Look for more details in our next issue.)

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	October
PUBLISHER	THREME
SCEA	Action
PLAYERS	SIZE
1	CD-ROM
	% COMPLETE
	N/A

BLASTO

PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THREME
Namco	 PlayStation	Adventure
RELEASE DATE	SIZE	% COMPLETE
November	1	CD-ROM
		N/A



Face yourselves for a totally new 3-D polygon-enhanced Pac-Man! Eat, jump, fly, swim, slide and roll your way through 14 new wacky worlds of adventure and animation. Dozens of tricks, power-ups, puzzles, mazes and traps await you as you explore Pac's house, negotiate frozen waterfalls and creep your way through a spooky haunted mansion. In your path lies 20 menacing ghosts and other bad guys all wreaking havoc for the first time in Pac history: the Ghost Lord! Not only can you bottle your enemies by gobbling them up for breakfast, lunch and dinner, but you can now eliminate them by hurling flying projectiles in their direction. Never before has Pac been able to move in any direction and explore so many different levels than in his latest, most adventurous game ever!



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SEPTEMBER

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product from
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interactive

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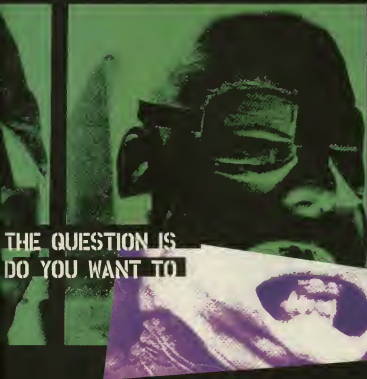
SUBJECT ENTERS HYPER-REALITY
OF THIRD DIMENSION



SUBJECT INTERACTS IN REAL
TIME WITH FELLOW PILOTS



SUBJECT PERSPECTIVE CHANGES
FROM VICTOR TO VICTIM



THE QUESTION IS
DO YOU WANT TO

CHANGE THE SYSTEM.
NINTENDO 64



REVIEW CREW



WARCRAFT II

GAME OF THE MONTH

SYSTEMS: SATURN
PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PREVIEWED: EGM #96
BEST FEATURE: LOCAL MULTIPLAYER
WORST FEATURE: CONTROL
ALSO TRY: C & C



SHAWN

Lobby, Shawn can't help but want to spend all his green on new technology. This isn't a bad thing, but these are things we rent and our insurance that get in the way sometimes. To help him solve his problem, Shawn has employed the services of his local icon officer Hooley for low interest rates. Who knows what'll happen next?

CURRENT FAVORITES: GoldenEye 007
Crash 2
Clock Tower
Disney's Hercules
FAVORITE GENRE: Action/Adventure



DAN

"Shaw" is mainly playing something sinister, but we're not sure what. All we know is, he keeps muttering "This I would like to put to rest." We're not taking him to 11; he's going to be a Game Boy Timonochi Sprink. Otherwise, Dan is in a pretty good mood since he did fairly well in the E-Street Fighter III tournament.

CURRENT FAVORITES: Return Bomber/Bien Albert Odyssey
Warcraft II
Disney's Hercules
FAVORITE GENRE: Strategy/Puzzle



CRISPIN

We'll get a little worked about 10 here, into the bus ride back from E' when we subbed that. Got weird with us. Then, out to go to see Sony's wedding, conference booth, and spent eight days living off bugs and rainwater. He's back at work now, and now he's happy that we're here to go to school. He hates being called Big-And-Rainwater Boy, too.

CURRENT FAVORITES: Albert Odyssey
Warcraft II
Clock Tower
Disney's Hercules
FAVORITE GENRE: Role-Playing



SUSHI-X

Now that E' is over, Sushi-X hardly been seen around the office. We suspect he's gotten the game bug and is huddled up somewhere, drooping into the large, lush of green, lush, lush, lush, and he's not his favorite. L.L. Coolio's new disc at T92, so we don't know if we'll come see him soon. Family, Sushi-X found a worthy video game woman.

CURRENT FAVORITES: Star Fox 64
Tomb Raider 2
PaRappa the Rappa
Play Foy
FAVORITE GENRE: Fighting



This one's a toughie for me to review (boy, this is a rough job...). I loved Warcraft III on the PC, it's one of the best realtime strategy games around. I played the PC version though and then, so at first, I was a bit turned off with the console version: 1) the graphics are a big step down (you can't get SVGA on a television screen, after all), and 2) the interface is inefficient (it's one big speed bump). Needless to say, if you own the PC Warcraft I, don't get the console version, you'll hate it. BUT, if you've never played the masterpiece before, and you like realtime strategy games like Command & Conquer, then do yourself a favor and pick this up. The console Warcraft II contains both the original Tides of Darkness and the expansion set, Beyond the Dark Portal. This means you get 52 missions in four campaigns (two human and two orc story lines) and 96 individual scenarios. Translation? You are getting one hell of a deal with this disc. I found a few updates to this home version: You can select more than nine units at a time (nine was the limit in the PC version), and you can auto-upgrade your buildings and troops and auto-build your soldiers. These let you give commands to your

buildings to automatically upgrade or build X number of troops, provided you have the proper resources to support them. Although I prefer the old hands-on approach, EA knew what they were doing, this automation makes up for some of the clumsiness in the interface. The downside to the Saturn translation? You can click on the mini-map to jump to different parts of the screen, and you'll have to get used to the interface (this game is definitely easier to play on the PC with a keyboard and mouse). But if you've never seen the PC version, this changes won't bother you at all. On its own, it's a terrific game. Warcraft II has so much to offer in terms of content. Every unit has its strengths and weaknesses, and it will take you a while to master the game. Unfortunately, the stoddy AI will make things easier for you. The computer opponent can be tough, but only in overwhelming numbers. You have to wonder what the CPU is thinking sometimes when it does something incredibly stupid. Too bad EA didn't make the game two-player NetLinkable, a world's made up for the AI, and my score may have been even higher. Still, great game, great review, great life.

-DAN

For a strategy game, Warcraft is one of the best, and this translation of the sequel onto the Saturn is fantastic with tons of scenarios. Anyone who wanted to play WCII on the PC (but couldn't afford a \$3,000 computer) will be pleased with this version. The control was a pinch to get into (after a good half hour or so), and the graphics—although far from being

mind-blowing—did the job. I liked the character voices and soundtrack with their medieval, Conan-esque touch, but at times the voice-over during the Mission Objectives Screen was a bit overzealous. I'm not a strategy wizard by any means, but I had a lot of fun with WCII. But remember, it is for strategy fans mostly with no overlap into other genres.

-SHAWN

I went into the game expecting control to be a hassle—and it was for about two hours, until I finally got the hang of using the joystick instead of the mouse (the new auto-options help make up for the less-than-ideal control). Two hours of trouble is nothing, though, cuz WCII packs enough campaign and scenarios to keep you busy for months. Like the console

translations of Command & Conquer, there's just a whole lotta game here. The 90 scenarios alone are worth the price. WCII's tiny characters are more detailed and easier to discern than the soldiers in C&C. Gameplay changes (like being able to control more than nine troops at a time) are a real plus, too. If only it were NetLink compatible.

-CRISPIN

The console translation of Warcraft II is good, even though it doesn't have the awesome multiplayer capability that made it so popular in PC gaming circles. To make up for this loss, extra mission discs and a scenario creator have been added, making the game an exceptional value. Warcraft II's gameplay will satisfy any realtime strategy fan, and (surprisingly)

enough) the Saturn controller isn't too hindering for a game that begs for a keyboard and mouse. Although the graphics aren't too impressive, they do the job. The audio, however, is top-notch. The high-quality medieval music is superb and sets the mood perfectly. For realtime strategy game fans, it doesn't get much better than this.

-SUSHI-X

RATING SCALE	10—PERFECTION	5—AVERAGE
	9—VIRTUALLY FLAWLESS	4—RENT FIRST
	8—SPLENDID	3—TIME WASTER
	7—WORTHY	2—DON'T EVEN RENT
	6—GOOD, NOT GREAT	1—FLUSH IT

EDITOR'S CHOICE Silver Awards are granted to games with a total average score of eight, while games that receive nine or above receive Gold Awards.

ADMIT IT.

Sometimes you'd feel better if you could just shoot every damn thing in sight.

(BUT THEN THERE'S THAT DEATH PENALTY THING.)

Time to lock and load, pal. Straight from arcades everywhere, here comes Maximum Force. It's you against relative terrorists and you control the body count. You'll board helicopters, ATVs, underwater vehicles and shoot literally everything in sight. Gun down slimeballs on three completely different missions. Blast your way into more than 35 secret rooms (three times as many as Area 51) and blow everything away with extreme prejudice. With Maximum Force, there's no such thing as too much firepower.

Go ahead, pull the trigger. And check out the Maximum Cool Sweepstakes at your nearest arcade.



PULL THE TRIGGER



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SYSTEM N64

TETRISPHERE

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

EGM
SILVER17/100
1.303

CATEGORY: PUZZLE

PREVIEWED: EGM#98

BEST FEATURE: TWO-PLAYER MODE

WORST FEATURE: DIFFICULT COMBOS

ALSO TRY: FIRST OF ITS KIND

Tetrisphere is a pretty decent game that takes a lot of skill to play or no skill at all. What am I talking about? When you play this game, you'll be tossed into one of two categories. The first type of player (the hardcore puzzle freak) will dissect this game and learn how to do the combos as they should be done. The second type (the casual player) will simply slide around pieces to match them and won't try for a combo at all. Herein lies the problem. The gravity combos in Tetrisphere are typical cascading combos found in games like Tetris Attack (where disappearing pieces will cause others to fall into combos). On a 3-D sphere, however, this is very difficult to do in a one-player timed game or a two-player Battle Mode. You will have to rotate the sphere around a few times and check out your puzzle layout from all angles in order to set up any kind of impressive combo. Easy to do in Practice Mode, impractical anywhere else. So most players will forget about combos and take the easy route: matching pieces up. If this no-combo, no-depth, no-brain way of playing is all you're going to do, you'll get bored real quick (I did). Otherwise, the wonderful graphics and numerous options (including a fun Puzzle Mode) save the game from getting an "average score" from me.

—DAN

Wow was the only word that came out when I first played this one. Everything from the graphics to the gameplay was perfect. What's nice is that you can be a novice and still have fun (since the game can be one of luck or skill). On top of that, the funny, sometimes ambient, sounds fit the game well. My gripe is that luck often plays too much of a part.

—SHAWN

Here's a game that takes a little getting used to. Tetrisphere's 3-D gameplay puts more strain on your brain than other combo-intensive puzzlers. Sure, you can get by with combos that clear the sphere's surface, but puzzle-game pros will want to unleash master combos that nuke blocks deep into the core—a skill that makes the game incredibly rewarding.

—CRISPIN

Tetrisphere is the best puzzle game that has the practical excellence to match its great graphics. The game concept is original, and there's plenty of game modes that alter the way that the game plays. Tetrisphere has a good learning curve as many different combo techniques give the gameplay depth. Tetrisphere is a treat to watch and more fun to play.

—SUSHIX

SYSTEM: SATURN

SKY TARGET

PUBLISHER: SEGA



CATEGORY: ARCADE

PREVIEWED: EGM#97

BEST FEATURE: COOL BOSS'S

WORST FEATURE: SOUNDTRACK

ALSO TRY: FANTASY ORANGE

I'm really surprised that Sega resisted the temptation of naming the game "After Burner 2000," because that's what it really is (more or less). Underneath its 3-D skin, Sky Target is little more than a remade After Burner. The game is a third-person, 3-D shooter in which you helm one of four aircraft in a mission to destroy a stolen high-tech fighter. Gameplay is very basic and consists of moving your crosshairs over targets in order to lock on your missiles or fire your guns (before the enemy planes lock on you). Although you can move the plane around the screen to dodge and live, you can't alter the game's set flight path for your mission. At the end of each level is an obligatory end boss that you must destroy which consists of some sort of huge flying machine (one is a large missile you must destroy). While this simplistic gameplay is entertaining for the first hour or so, its lack of depth and difficulty makes Sky Target boring over the long haul. There are no power-ups and little variety between missions except for different types of terrain. The 3-D graphics are fast and furious, but look rough and blocky in spots. Although it isn't a big distraction, it gives the game an unpolished feel. With these lukewarm visuals and plain gameplay, it isn't worth your while to lock-on to Sky Target.

—SUSHIX

Sure some of the background music sounds like a them's rock, but that's OK. Sky Target is a fun game that has plenty of action (that arcade type of action). Lots of creativity went into the levels, having you fly in all sorts of conditions and directions. The graphics could've been much better, but they're not bad. It's good, but where's the replay value, eh?

—SHAWN

Sega has no excuse here. If they can put out a beautiful track shooter like Panzer Origoon, it then why couldn't they here? Sky Target's shoddy graphics make it difficult to follow the action. You'll probably just press the buttons rapidly and hope you won't get hit. The music is ridiculous, and the game is way too short. You can find much better arcade shooters.

—DAN

There's nothing really mind-blowing about Sky Target. It's just an average shooter that plays a little like After Burner. It's a little like Panzer Origoon, OK, it plays a little like ABII—except you can't perform barrel rolls or even kick an afterburner. Your battles with the huge Bosses are the best part of the game. The arena-rock soundtrack gets carry at times.

—CRISPIN

SYSTEM: SATURN

ALBERT ODYSSEY

PUBLISHER: WORKING DESIGNS

EGM
SILVER

CATEGORY: RPG

PREVIEWED: EGM#95

BEST FEATURE: DIALOGUE

WORST FEATURE: TOO MUCH COMBAT

ALSO TRY: SHINING WEDDING

Albert Odyssey's appeal isn't driven by camera-crazy polygonal battle sequences, hours of voice acting or any of the other snazzy staples of modern RPGs. It's just a nice-looking game with an engaging story line and plenty of Working Designs' trademark humor. In fact, it's the dialogue that makes AD so memorable.

Here's a for-instance. Early in the game, a guard threatens to open a can of "whip ass" on your party. Not exactly the mood-setting stuff of most RPGs, but funny nonetheless. Hell, I actually looked forward to talking to the townsfolk, usually a chore in other games. AD is very much a traditional RPG, with a linear, city-by-city progression of the plot and random, turn-based battles. These battles do come a little too often for my tastes. Sometimes it seems I can't take three steps in a dungeon without being beat by another bout of combat. And—although it may not sound like much—the five seconds of load time before each fight gets old really quick (still, the load times are much shorter than the Japanese version). The graphics are simple—a bit 16-bitish, in fact—but still nicely detailed and at times downright gorgeous. The orchestrated soundtrack doesn't disappoint, either. Oh, and wait until you go up against the final Boss. Talk about tough!

—CRISPIN

Besides this one being a solid RPG, the dialogue is some of the most hilarious in any RPG to date—even compared to other Working Designs' titles. Any game that can poke fun at itself gets my respect. On top of this, the graphics look great and the fighting system is easy to use. The story line is interesting, but it is pretty much a standard RPG story.

—SHAWN

I hate having to review games like this. They suck you in, they keep you around and before you know it, a few weeks of your life have passed. Albert Odyssey is not only beautiful (both musically and graphically), it has one of the best, most involving story lines seen in an RPG. The witty dialogue is a treat on the side. The only bad part: Combat is a drag.

—DAN

Albert Odyssey doesn't offer anything groundbreaking as far as traditional RPGs go, but the writing is excellent (no RPG has ever made me laugh out loud this much without raising any of the dramatic scenes) and the music is fantastic. Load times are a bit on the annoying side, but otherwise, Albert should be more than enough for 16-bit-starved Saturn owners.

—SUSHIX

9
VISUALS7
SOUND8
INGENUITY9
REPLAY5
VISUALS4
SOUND3
INGENUITY4
REPLAY8
VISUALS8
SOUND5
INGENUITY2
REPLAY

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SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
CLOCK TOWER

PUBLISHER: ASCII



CATEGORY: ADVENTURE

PREVIEWED: EGM #90

BEST FEATURE: SCISSORWOMAN!

WORST FEATURE: SLOW AT TIMES

ALSO TRY: RESIDENT EVIL

ASCII comes through with another corker. I haven't been this scared while playing a game since Kirby's Superstar on the Super NES. Seriously though, there are plenty of instances in Clock Tower that'll keep you on the edge of your seat—more so than Resident Evil in my estimation. It starts off really, really slow (which originally turned me off, but I stuck with it [like all good gamers should]), and it turned out to be one of my favorites this month. All of the different characters to not only interact with but also control makes Clock Tower a game with tons of variables (and a good amount of different endings to boot). The mouse control isn't a must, but it helped. Beware: The Save Menu must be accessed by pressing the Start button, which isn't present on the PlayStation mouse. Some of the dialogue could've been better but then again, that kind of adds to the B-movie quality of the game. One gripe that comes to mind is the way Scissorman comes out of somewhere he shouldn't be, for example, at one point, I took the elevator up to the third floor, and Scissorman attacked! I tried to use the elevator again but it was broken, so I took the only set of stairs in the building, but somehow Scissorman got downstairs before me. Hmmm. I'll play this one again and again.

—SHAWN

The best part of Clock Tower is getting to creep up behind any co-workers who are playing and seeing the heck out of them. This game does an excellent job of creating a suspenseful and frightening atmosphere. Combine that with the best interface I've seen in a graphical adventure, and you got a winner. All it's missing is a little more action and excitement.

—DAN

This simple-to-play point-and-click adventure may not be much to look at, but it packs the most suspenseful story line since D. The game made me leap in my seat at least 20 times. Sometimes CI crawls a little, though, like when you're forced to step through long, boring conversations. But the 10 different endings keep you coming back for more.

—CRISPIN

I know this is a smooch hit in Japan, but at times, it's hard to see why. You can't interact with many of the objects on-screen, and you're guided directly to the next cut scene without wanting to follow the plot. The most interesting takes place when you're being chased by Scissorman and need to find a way to escape. Even then, the solutions are obvious.

—SUSHIX

6 VISUALS 9 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 9 REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
DISNEY'S HERCULES

PUBLISHER: VIRGIN



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIEWED: EGM #98

BEST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

WORST FEATURE: SPOOLS THE MOVIE

ALSO TRY: CRASH BANDICOOT

I have yet to see the movie, and I don't know if I will now, because I'm pretty sure the game has warned a lot of the story line for me. So be warned if you haven't seen the movie and pick the game up first. Hercules is one of the best games to come from Virgin (well, actually the developers, Eurocom Entertainment software and Disney Interactive) as far as Virgin's side-scrollers go (i.e., Aladdin, Jungle Book, etc.) because of the cool new style the game has. The game isn't just 2-D like the old Disney-based titles were. In this one they have Hercules going on all sorts of directions with semi-3-D environments. Semi-3-D because there are polygons being used [in pretty cool-looking styles, by the way], but there are also plenty of well-animated sprites combined with the polygons. The game also uses melodies and iconography from the movie, so get ready for a wacky festival with plenty of humor while playing. I liked going through the one, although some of the levels were annoyingly difficult. The game has some minor rough edges that'll more than likely be overlooked if played. I guess it all comes down to liking Disney's style or not, but for me, this type of game works well with the funny characters, dramatic Bosses and some long levels.

—SHAWN

This sleeper came out of nowhere and surprised us all at EGM. Hercules takes everything you liked from old side-scrolling classics and gives them a big 3-D boost. This game looks incredible, the levels are innovative and the Bosses are formidable. The controls are mediocre (you'll take a bit of unnecessary hit), and the game is short, but it's still recommended.

—DAN

This one takes me back to the good days of Virgin's 16-Bit Disney-based games. Hercules picks the old-school charm and gameplay of classics like Aladdin, combined with the most fluid animation yet seen in a PlayStation game. It offers a good variety of levels, too (the side-scrolling stages are the best). I do wish it was easier to collect passwords.

—CRISPIN

This is one of the biggest surprises to come out of E! Hercules is an outstanding platform game that really captures the look and feel of the Disney movie. The hand-drawn art is excellent, in addition to its technique of combining 2-D and 3-D graphics. There is plenty of variety between levels, and (most importantly) this game is just a lot of fun to play.

—SUSHIX

9 VISUALS 8 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION
DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIEWED: EGM #94

BEST FEATURE: GRAPHICS

WORST FEATURE: GIFT SCULPT

ALSO TRY: WC IV

Darklight Conflict may look like a jizzed-up Wing Commander IV, but it's actually an eye-catching hybrid of old-school arcade shooters and modern aims. Although the more than 50 missions do dole out Wing Commander-style objectives, enemies still blurt out of the inky vacuum in waves—and often in patterns—so the game becomes repetitive fairly quickly. And the enemy AI is a joke. Dropping ships rarely respond to your attacks, often flying in random patterns. Their favorite tactic, in fact, is to jet in so close that you can't help but ram into—er, not exactly a brilliant strategy. All you gotta do is pop on your autuberator and blast the bad guys from a safe distance. But while dispatching enemies is easy, some of the 50 missions are more frustrating than fun. A few have you protecting friendly bases that are too easy for enemies to destroy. Others stick you in a stationary turret, and rammings those gun pods is apparently the bad guys' favorite hobby. The lack of analog control certainly doesn't help, either; you're forced to tap, tap, tap until you're on target. DC does look nice, with vibrant lighting effects similar to those in Psygnosis' forthcoming Colony Wars. But I don't care how good DC looks when you're forced to repeat a moky mission 50 times. It just ain't fun.

—CRISPIN

Although it isn't analog compatible, I like the 3-D feeling of free space that Darklight Conflict provided even with the regular PS pad. The arcade feel of DC makes it everything I wanted from regular space-flight aims. I like the no-frills action of the game and the graphics are incredible—a bit barren at times though. Plus, the voices sound good.

—SHAWN

Looking for needless eye-candy? Here it is. Although the game looks better than its competition (i.e., Wing Commander IV), the repetitive gameplay and lack of a story line hurts. Sure the missions vary stage to stage, but you are basically doing the same thing over and over. A nice-looking package that lacks any depth a serious gamer would want.

—DAN

To turn the game up quickly: The PC version is a whole lot better. Darklight Conflict is an ambitious 3-D space adventure that doesn't bother with the cheesy Mark Hamill movie segments. This game is entertaining, but the missions become too hard. Even worse, their difficulty is multiplied by the cumbersome game control (no analog support, either).

—SUSHIX

7 VISUALS 5 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY

RACING With avengance

6 BAD ASS
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OF INSANITY

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DEATH KNUCKLE
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SYSTEM PLAYSTATION

OGRE BATTLE

PUBLISHER: ATLUS



CATEGORY: STRATEGY

PREVIOUSLY: SGM/PSX

BEST FEATURE: GAMEPLAY DEPTH

WORST FEATURE: OLD GRAPHICS

ALSO TRY: WANDAL HEARTS

Finally, more of us will get a chance to play the ever-elusive OGRE Battle. This game may have been one of the best strategy games of its time, but its time has since past. Not that OGRE Battle is bad by any means, it's actually very enjoyable. But a few things keep it from scoring that hard-to-get 5.0, like the micro managing you won't want to do (but you know you should) or the lack of involvement you take inside the actual battles. The managing bit involves a lot of thinking and paperwork to make a winning strategy. After all, you do want to get the best ending (out of 123, don't you? And about the combat, I wished that the battles weren't automated. I like the menu-driven decisions I have to make in RPG battles, like in Final Fantasy games. So why does OGRE Battle still get an 8.0? It has a lot of depth to it, and it never seems to get old. You'll enjoy seeing all the different troop types and magical spells the game has to offer. OGRE Battle is fairly non-linear (for that type of game, anyway) and is loaded with secrets to find if you've played through the Super NES version. I wouldn't recommend this one, since it's the same game with a facelift (unless, of course, you're a diehard fan). If you haven't, and you're a patient, deviously-oriented person, then by all means, give it a try. —DAN

OGRE Battle is complicated at times, but it's not everyday you play a game like this, so I won't complain. Since I'm more of an action buff, I was surprised to find myself getting into OB as heavily as I did. The graphics were old-school, but so is the game. I never played the Super NES version, but maybe now I will! It's one for those who want a long game. —SHAWN

OGRE Battle is the most in-depth strategy game on the consoles. Like in the Super NES original, you have to craft individual fighting units, set up tactical formations, defend towns—all while balancing the down or so factors that affect your reputation meter, and thus your ending. The demanding gameplay turned me off a bit, but strategy works well for me. —CRISPIN

Not being a strategy fan, I didn't expect much from OGRE Battle, but I was pleasantly surprised. Any gamer will be able to pick up the mechanics of this Dragon Force-style strategy game, even a cynic like me. My biggest complaint is the inability to directly control each fighter's actions in a battle. Still, the Japanese hit will be a fine addition to any library. —SUSHIX

SYSTEM PLAYSTATION

FELONY II-79

PUBLISHER: ASCII



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIOUSLY: SGM/MSB

BEST FEATURE: SECRETS

WORST FEATURE: ONLY 3 COURSES

ALSO TRY: DIE HARD TRILOGY

I can't say it's the most solid game I've ever seen but it certainly is a lot of fun. I've never played a title where you have to steal stuff, drive fast and get away from cops in order to advance in the game, but I like it. (That's not what games are for.) The courses—only two to choose from at the start—are organic with a bunch of winding paths and multiple routes. "Only two tracks" you say? The replay value is questionable at first, but with additional plays, you'll find that there's a load of cars to find, extra tracks (one regular track and a practice track) and hidden niter in trucks already played. The varying vehicle control on different kinds of surfaces (like sand) is a nice touch, but the manual transmission in the last cars is a little tricky for me—since I'm always skidding out whenever I downhill while in a turn. Getting back to the destructive things in the game, I would've liked to have seen bloody pedestrian deaths instead of this just running out of the way. Now I know that sounds bad, but I figure if you're gonna run over some people, why not do it with style? The graphics are detailed and all, but I wouldn't mind seeing some of that polygon clipping out of the way. All and all, it's a good game with lots of options. —SHAWN

Felony II-79 could've and should've scored much higher. It's a great game with a great concept, it certainly is more interesting than any racing game on the market. The problem is, I beat the whole thing in under an hour. I don't care that the game is loaded with secrets. After you beat the game, you've basically seen 95 percent of what it has to offer. —DAN

This unusual race—which plays like the driving levels of Die Hard Trilogy—would've scored higher if it offered more than four courses (one of which is a training course). The only thing keeping you playing after you beat it is five hours or less in the nearly 20 hidden cars you earn for meeting various objectives. If rather have less vehicles, more tracks. —CRISPIN

I love it when companies try making an original game, but I hate it when there's very little of it. You get both with Felony II-79, a game that combines racing, carnage and crime into one neat package. Replay offers several different vehicles, but only three different levels. Although the game is challenging, it's way too short, making it perfect to rent. —SUSHIX

SYSTEM PLAYSTATION

SYNDICATE WARS

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIOUSLY: SGM/PSX

BEST FEATURE: MOODY GRAPHICS

WORST FEATURE: CONTROLS

ALSO TRY: CRUSADER

Being a big fan of Syndicate, I couldn't wait to get my claws on this sequel—especially since I knew it was going to look better than the PC version. Well, turns out it was a long wait (SW was one of the first titles announced for the PlayStation), and I'm a little disappointed with the finished product. My gripes aren't with the basic gameplay. With its way-cool weapons, sprawling cities and teams of ultraviolent agents, SW follows the original's winning formula. It's just that the awkward control scheme keeps the game from living up to its potential. You have to memorize layers of cryptic commands to choose your agents, pick their weapons, etc. And aiming is so difficult you'll probably ventilate a dozen civilians before you nail the bad guys. The mouse—which works in conjunction with the control pad—helps a little, but your best bet is to play with up to three friends and let 'em worry about their own agents. Control complaints aside, SW is still a solid sequel. The Blade Runner-esque cities are extremely detailed, with moiré lighting effects, heavy traffic and hovering billboards. Plus, you can rotate your view when structures get in the way. The 3D-plus resolution will keep you busy, but it's the nasty weapons you get later on that'll hold your interest. —CRISPIN

I remember being all stoked when the PC version of this came out, and finally it has come to the PlayStation. I can't say I'm all that impressed. A lot of the little character animations look weak, animation isn't just as fun as the first one—definitely not as easy to get into. Graphically, it's decent, but nothing revolutionary. A rental rent for me. —SHAWN

I searched and searched, but I could find only one reason to play this game: the atmosphere. I like the futuristic Blade Runner-type setting, but other factors weighed this game down, like the so-so animation, the pain in the butt controls and the boring gameplay. You pretty much do the same thing each stage. If you don't play Syndicate Wars, you won't miss much. —DAN

The main problem with this game is the controls. I sorely need a keyboard. There are so many different button combinations to do the most essential things that it seems like you're playing Street Fighter. If you're willing to take a lot of extra time to learn the game, you might find Syndicate Wars satisfying. Otherwise, be prepared to get very frustrated. —SUSHIX

4

6

7

5

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7

8

8

6

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

5

6

6

3


VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY



FLARED NOSTRILS TO SMELL FEAR.

A REINFORCED NECK FOR RAMMING PREY HEAD-FIRST.

SERRATED TEETH TO SLICE THROUGH BONE.





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MACE
THE DARK AGE

EVERYTHING'S A WEAPON.

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MIDWAY



Tricks Of The Trade

Twisted Metal 2

—by Sony Computer Entertainment for PlayStation

Here are some of the most interesting codes ever found for this game! Just begin a new game, and while you are playing, do the actions below for various results:

Invincibility: While playing, press and hold the L1 and R1 buttons simultaneously. With those buttons Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up.

Infants Weapons: While playing, press and hold the L2 and R2 buttons simultaneously. While those buttons held, press Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up.

Mega Guns: While playing, press and hold the purchase gun button. With this held, press Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up. Your machine guns will be upgraded to Mega Guns. They do more than twice the damage of normal machine guns.

Homing Napalm: While playing, make sure you have at least two or most napalm to start with. Hit High, the napalm will appear and hold the fire button (L2). Then, press Up, Down, Down, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right. The napalm will seek out your opponents (all, having results).

Jason Hunt
Wichita, KS

Robotron X

—by Midway for PlayStation

Some times you have to build a certain amount of items, and it's tedious to run up and down power-ups. Well what if there was a way to get them power-ups all by purchasing a few keys? Here are the key combinations for most of the power-ups in the game. Just enter below keys before within your game (Don't pause).

For the **Fractalizer** enter: Down, Right, Down, Right, Left.
For the **Pulse Wave** enter: Up, Circle, Down, Right, Square.
For the **Speed Boost** enter: Left, Left, Right, Right, Triangle.
For the **Shield** enter: Down, Left, Square, Circle.

For the **Two-Way Weapon** enter: Up, Triangle, Up, Triangle.
For the **Three-Way Weapon** enter: Right, Right, Square, X.
For the **Four-Way Weapon** enter: Down, Down, Up, Circle.

WILD ARMS

THE HEAL BERRY 255 ITEM CHEAT

This trick will give you 255 duplicates of the items in your inventory. There are a few different ways to do this trick, depending on the number of items you have. During battle, access the "Fight" icon and then choose the "Item" icon after that. Pick the item you want to duplicate and make sure you only have one of that item. Now, make your first character (Rudy) use a Heal Berry. Have the next character (Jack) also use a Heal Berry. Have the third character (Cecilia) go into the Item Screen and switch the position of the Heal Berry with the item that you want duplicated. After you do this, exit the screen and choose the "Defend" icon. The battle will start.

After the battle is over, go back into your items and you will see that you have 255 of the item you switched with the Heal Berry!

If you have more than one item, but you want 255 of that item, do the trick this way. When it's your turn in the battle, have your first character use a Heal Berry. Make your second character go into the Item Screen and switch the Heal Berry with the item you want to duplicate. Then exit the screen and choose the "Defend" icon. Have your third character just



Access the Item icon and have two characters both use a Heal Berry.



Have Cecilia highlight the items to be switched (example: Medicine).



Switch the Heal Berry with the item you want duplicated 255 times.

choose the "Defend" icon. After the battle is over, go back into your items and the item you wanted duplicated will be missing and replaced with an empty slot. Do the trick once again for the next battle, but this time, have the second character put the Heal Berry in the empty slot. After the battle ends, go into your items and you'll have 255 of that item. Also, to get 255 Heal Berries, do the trick as you would if you wanted to duplicate an item that had more than one. But this time, put the Heal



Have Cecilia defend (choose the Defend icon) and do the battle.



Once the battle ends, look back in the Items screen for 255 Medicine!

Berry in an empty space below the other items and do the trick.

Charlie Huxley, Philadelphia, PA

System: PlayStation Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

PLAYSTATION UNDERGROUND NO. 2

MANY HIDDEN ITEMS

For now, here is what has been discovered on CD #1: **MechWarrior II: unlimited ammo code:** At the Main Menu, hold the Square, Triangle and Circle buttons simultaneously and then press X.

K-1 The Arena Fighters: combo moves: At the Main Menu, hold L1, R1 and R2. Then press L2.

Preview of Intelligent Qube: Inside the Imports Screen, press Square, Triangle and Circle at the same time rapidly.

Twisted Metal 2 fan: Inside the Download Screen, hold all four top L and R buttons simultaneously. With these held, press and hold Triangle and Circle. With all of these held, press Square.

Game tester picture: Inside the Research and Development screen, hold L1+R1 and press Square, Triangle and Circle at the



Some codes are done at the Main Menu Screen as shown here.



Get secret codes for MechWarrior II. Peak Performance and more!



A preview of Intelligent Qube is hidden inside the Imports Screen.

same time rapidly. **Blasto remark:** Inside the Tech Q & A Screen, press Square, Triangle and Circle at the same time. **Peak Performance code:** Inside



Find a hidden preview pic of Blasto with a smart remark!

the Bullseye Screen, hold L1+R1 and press Square, Triangle and Circle at the same time rapidly.

Brian Leaky, Osteen, FL

System: PlayStation Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

MAGIC CARPET

CHEAT MODE

To access this Cheat Mode, go to the Options Screen and play sounds: **11, 31, 18, 5, 26 and 22** in that order. If done correctly, "Cheat" will appear at the top of the screen and a Level Select Option will appear at the bottom. Choose the level you wish to play and begin your game. Pause, then press the **X**



Do the trick by playing the sounds in order to get "Cheat" at the top. button to access all the spells, the **Y** button to finish the level or **Z** button to get extra lives.

System: Saturn Publisher: Electronic Arts

WAR GODS

UNLIMITED CONTINUES

In a one-player game, begin the match. After you die on the second round, and your opponent does his winning pose, wait until the announcer says the word "WINS". As soon as he starts to say it, press the Start button rapidly. If you did it correctly, it will go to the Player Select Screen and you won't use a continue!



When the announcer says the word, "WINS" press Start rapidly.

Boston James
Coral Springs, FL

System: Nintendo 64 Publisher: Midway

TEN PIN ALLEY

BOWL-OFF CODE

On the Game Setup Screen make the Play Style a "Tournament" game and put this code in the sixth slot of the roster as **Vilooms**. This will enter you in a bowl-off with another player. You will have to try to get strikes in the ninth and 10th frames to beat your opponent with a perfect score. Entering players in any



Enter Vilooms as your name in the sixth slot to play a bowl-off match. of the other slots will register them in the bowl-off too.

Richard Diaz: Boston, MA

System: PlayStation Publisher: ASC Games

CODENAME: TENKA

ALL WEAPONS, LEVEL WARP

These cheats are sure to improve your progress in the game. Press Start to pause within your game and enter these incredible codes.

All Weapons: Hold L1 and press Triangle, R1, Triangle, Square, R1, Circle, Square, Square. Then release L1.
Level Warp: Hold L2 and press Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle,



Pause the game and enter these codes to give you the advantage.

R1, Square, Triangle, Circle. Then release L2.

System: PlayStation Publisher: Pygmysoft

When he asks
for a donut,



THUNDER TRUCK RALLY

VEHICLE CHEATS

Go to the Main Menu Screen and enter the following for various results. You will hear a beep, if entered correctly

Big Trucks: L1, R2, L2, R1 and Up. Your truck will have a new shape!

No Damage: Left, Left, Left, Left, Up, Down, L1 and R2. You'll have no worries of breaking down.



With the "Big Trucks" cheat, you'll have a distorted-looking vehicle!

Super Car: L2, Left, Right, Up, Down, R2. Now you can zoom ahead to the first position!

System: PlayStation Publisher: Psygnosis

TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD

UNLOCK TRACKS, MIXED LEAGUE CUPS

To do this trick, you must first go to Options, and into the Driver 1 setup. Next, go into Enter Name. Clear the name, and enter **ALLTRACK**. Press Triangle to exit, but then go back into the name entry screen. Clear the name again and enter **ELVIS**. Now when you go back into the Practice and Mixed League Options, all



After entering the names, you'll see that the tracks and mixed league cups will be open!

Don Muffley, St. Williamsport, PA

System: PlayStation Publisher: Accolade

DAYTONA USA: C.C.E.

SUPERCAR AND TWO HORSES

For the Supercar Daytona hold X+Y+Z+R and then press C to select your game. Daytona will appear at the Car Select Screen.

For Uma enter the Daytona code, return to the Main Menu and hold X+Z+L. Then press C to select your game. For Uma 2 enter the Uma code, return to the Main



Enter the codes in the order described for the car and horses.

Menu and hold L+R+Y+Z. Then press C to select your game.

System: Saturn Publisher: Sega

TOBAL 2

VICTORY DANCE

You can do this slick in Arcade or Vs. Mode. As soon as you win both rounds of the match with your character, press and hold Up+Right+L2 and you will get a pause for a few seconds. Instead of the normal victory pose, your character will go into a cool victory dance that lasts for a little while. While playing, use the



While in the victory dance, use the pad to rotate; L1 and L2 to zoom.

pad to rotate the view, L1 to zoom out, and L2 to zoom in.

This 1992 Sega Saturn title is a licensed version of the game.

System: PlayStation Publisher: SquareSoft of Japan

give it
to him.

SP
4.POLICE

PSYGNOSIS

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FELONY

11-79™



YOU'RE SERVING UP MASSIVE DESTRUCTION AND ROADKILL IS THE MAIN COURSE.

You'll cross over more than a few double yellow lines in this driving game of mass destruction. With limited time to reach your objective, you won't be waiting for any lights to turn green. Whoops! You forgot to knock before pummeling through a neighbor's living room window. Tact never was your strong suit.

Your weapon is your wheels. And, if you're good, real good, you'll get to drive up to 22 of 'em. Like a limo, a badass pickup, a formula one racer, hell, even a tank if your hot-wiring skills are up to snuff.

Don't expect any citizen-of-the-month award. Expect spine-tingling action, hair-raising crashes and the never-seen-before track cam view.



ASCII
ENTERTAINMENT

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ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT



Atlanta '97
Show

E! GAMES WRAPS UP 'E3'

The Most Exciting "Boring" Show Ever?

Now that the glitz and excitement of E! has subsided, it's time for all of the journalists to give their editorial comments about the show. The early reviews we have seen are surprisingly negative.

Statements like "nothing new" or "boring" are commonplace. We don't think that is entirely true. Granted, the show didn't have many surprises, but there are good reasons why.

First, there were no major announcements but then again, none were expected. The only one of consequence was Sega's price drop to \$149, and that was announced well before the show. There were no system price wars, no new breakthroughs in technology, no new anything. Rather boring from a journalistic point of view, huh?

Second, there was no new hardware. But that wasn't a surprise either. Sega was already ready with their new 64-bit system; Nintendo's major presentations are only made at their Shoshinko Show in Japan; there was no unveiling of Matsushita's M2 (the rumors were leaning toward a "Next M2" rather than a launch); and Sony, with a record-breaking Christmas season coming up, certainly wasn't going to muddy

the waters with rumors of a new system or upgrade.

The third main complaint was that there were few software titles at the show that we haven't seen already. Sure, there actually were a lot of new, deep-in-development games, but this time all of the major companies had made road trips to the magazine's well before the show and gave editors hands-on demonstrations of almost all of the new products.

So why did the companies tip their hands so early? Time at the show is valuable and companies only get a few minutes to demo their games and talk about future coverage with the press. On the other hand, if the software companies come to the magazines early, they get hours of preview time with the editors and more space in the pre-E! issues of the magazines. That's a heck of a lot better than after-show coverage, where each game gets the obligatory two-sentence summary and one small picture in a magazine's E! wrap-up issue.

Also, this year's E! was scheduled one month later than in previous years. The extra month lets late in a game's development cycle can mean the difference between a "watch-only" demo and a playable beta version. When the game is playable, companies can get important feedback from the editors as to what they think about the product.

Finally, there were fewer innovative games

at this show, but it's tough for companies to bet the farm on something that may try to be revolutionary, yet not end up that way (Bubay 3D, anybody). Sequels are generally easier and cheaper to create and safer bets in terms of name recognition when there are hundreds of other new games on the store shelves. Plus, with so many new systems being sold this year, slightly modified versions of games (Resident Evil Director's Cut) or budget-priced reissues of older games are going to appeal to new system owners and guarantee sales (and more profit) to the game companies.

While the show itself may have drawn mixed reviews from the press, game players will have the best holiday season ever, not only by being able to choose from three great game systems—each at its lowest price in years—but also by being able to choose from the widest variety of new and classic games to play also at their best prices in years.

Of course, if you read our 16-page E! supplement last month, you already knew that. Still, 16 pages is hardly enough to cover the year's biggest show, so this month we thought we'd revisit E! and analyze the top stories, the top games and everything else that made this so-called "uneventful" show so darn exciting.

—E! Chief Correspondent Ed Simrad

EIDOS
MONTREAL

You've been warned.

CORE



Go play to traffic. Use incoming cars to turn hoodlums into hood ornaments.



Fight alone or share the earnings with a buddy. Mix it up with Mace, Hunk, Geminet & Aiana.



There's no ring, no referee and no "follow the bell" calls. Fight, meet Mr. Klein.

Image courtesy of Eidos Montreal. The Deus Ex: Human Revolution logo and other trademarks are trademarks of Eidos Montreal. © 2011 Eidos.



"LOOK BOTH WAYS

BEFORE CROSSING THE

STREET. THEY USUALLY

ATTACK IN PAIRS!"

- Hawk Manson

YOU WANNA FIGHT? TAKE IT OUTSIDE. BECAUSE THIS BATTLE IS TOO BIG FOR SOME SKINNY

ASS ARENA. 4 KILLER CHARACTERS. DOZENS OF BRUTAL WEAPONS. TONS OF CRUSHING MOVES. AND VICIOUS 3D ACTION THAT GOES SO FAST, THERE'S ONLY TIME TO REMEMBER HALF THE GOLDEN RULE.

SO BY ANY AND ALL MEANS, DO UNTO OTHERS. BECAUSE IN YOUR HANDS, ALMOST ANYTHING CAN BECOME A WEAPON. JUST REMEMBER TO WASH THEM AFTERWARDS.

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WORST GAME OF THE SHOW

**Censored!!
Censored!!**

Clearly the worst game at E³ was the one that Virgin was showing behind closed doors (thank heavens).

Tentatively going under the name of S&M (Slaughter and Mutilation), the game takes place in hell, and it seems to fall best in the fighting game category, although the amount of gratuitous violence goes beyond anything we've ever seen to date—hence the name. In an interview, the programmers stated that the game was designed from the beginning to "push the envelope" and to be the most gruesome and goriest game ever. In fact, their press release states "...decapitations, amputations and disemboweling are the order of the day."

Now we are not ones who get squeamish with seeing blood, violence, mutilation, gore and the like, but the line has to be drawn somewhere. Doing gore without purpose is not appropriate. If the game is to be a fighting game, we believe that you should create a "kick ass" fighting engine to show the Capcom, or Midway that they aren't the only companies that can design a well-balanced fighter. After this is done, then add the features which would make your game memorable.

Anyway, in their defense, S&M was still early in development and things could change in the future. More as it develops.

E³'s Got A Big, Ol' Booth, Aw Yeah...

If it wasn't apparent in the coverage of this year's show, some of the booths were minsters. Sony's booth in particular made some of us dizzy, while Nintendo's great expanse left most of us in awe. Sega's area, which was one of the biggest booths at the show, was more or less what we're used to here in the "plains state" (you know, kinda flat like Illinois).

Square footage-wise, some of the booths had numbers like those (remember that the area of a NFL-sized football field is 57500 sq. ft.):

- Sony: approx. 40,000 sq. ft.
- Nintendo: approx. 40,000 sq. ft.
- Sega: approx. 40,000 sq. ft.
- Acclaim: approx. 12,000
- Activision: approx. 8,000 sq. ft.
- Ziff-Davis Inc.: 1,800 sq. ft.

The three biggies (Sega, Sony and Nintendo) had the biggest booths of course, but that's not to say the smaller companies had lame booths. In fact, some were quite large with



lots of neat flashy lights, cool music and beautiful (or sometimes frightening) women walking around in string bikinis.

So how much does all this stuff cost? One exhibitor that had a booth in the main conference hall which was around 4,000 sq. ft. said, "We were lucky to get our cost under \$1 million." This cost includes the floor space, kiosks, lights, etc. If we multiply that by who knows how much for the 40,000 sq. ft. booths, it's not hard to tell that they must've easily cost \$20 million or more. Obviously, a booth of any size is a pricey endeavor at E³.



E³; A SHOW OF SECRECY...

Although E³ is a show where companies are supposed to strut their stuff, just the opposite is beginning to take place. Weary of competition getting glances at their products before their completion, companies are resorting to restricting access to part of, or even all of their booths.

Personifying this change was Virgin's large, green military tent that restricted access to all whose badge didn't have a red Virgin sticker on it. Inside was NHL Powerplay '98, Slaughter & Mutilation and Hercules. The front of Doeman's booth was a huge, imposing wall. Lined along it were frantic public relations people yanking unsuspecting press from the aisles and asking them to step inside (I'm always weary of propositions like that.) Interplay had a small, appointment-only booth that

showed Powerboat Racing and Jimmy Johnson's VR Football among others.

Many companies let you think you were seeing everything, but only the "privileged" were allowed to see all. EA Sports had the most interesting type of setup, as many of their secret games were inside an armored Humvee limo (shouldn't that be in Virgin's military tent?) parked in front of their sports bar. Behind the bar was an entrance allowing access to Madden NFL 98, NBA Live 98 and NHL 98 (all were absent from the show floor). Acclaim

had a tape of NFL QB Club '98 on the floor, but only select people were lucky enough to go inside the bowels of the booth to get a hands-on demonstration.

As the competition continues to heat up, the amount of secrecy in the E³'s facade of "show-all" is only going to increase. Look for more military tents, Great Walls, and Humvees to make E³ look more like a military installation, instead of a trade show.



Only prying eyes could spy EA's Madden 98 (left).



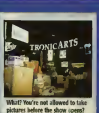
Stupid airport delays! I guess we'll just expense more ice cream.



And the sign said: NO CRIMPS ON CRIMPS ALLOWED!



What's up with all these pictures of Crispin? What a camera bug...



What? You're not allowed to take pictures before the show opens?

WORKING DESIGNS TO END PUBLISHING FOR SEGA

Working Designs dropped one of the show's biggest bombshells when word got around that they would stop publishing games for the Saturn. The Redding, Calif.-based company has served as Sega's RPG workhorse since the days of the Sega CD, localizing and releasing classic Japanese titles such as the Lunar RPGs and more recently Iron Storm and Dragon Force for the Saturn. Now—following a tiff with Sega of America—Working Designs will publish only four more Saturn games: Albert Odyssey, Sega Ages, Magic Knight Rayearth and Lunar Silver Star Story Complete.

The split is undoubtedly bad news for Sega. Working Designs earned a sizable following of Sega devotees, with award-winning titles like Dragon Force selling more than 150,000 copies. But it's perhaps even worse news for fans of the Lunar games. Since Working Designs owns the American rights to the popular RPG series, no more Sega titles means no more Lunar games in America, right?

Not necessarily. "Lunar Silver Star Story is absolutely our last Lunar that will be on the Saturn," said Working Designs president Victor Ireland. "Everything else will be on another platform, regardless of which platform it's

released for in Japan."

Ireland explained that porting future Saturn Lunar games to other platforms such as the PlayStation is not a technical impossibility. "Since the games are all generally 2-D, it's not a big deal," he said, adding that the main drawback would be the six months of extra time Working Designs would have to spend on each title.

Other games Saturn owners will miss are several Thunder Force shooter complements that—along with Thunder Force 5—Working Designs had planned to bring to the Saturn under their Spaz label. Ireland added that his company's still-rosy relationship with Sega of Japan—who has been Working Design's main source of Japanese titles—could have yielded another two to three Saturn games, as well.

So why abandon these prospects and bring an end to what Ireland once called a family-like relationship with Sega? The outspoken Ireland said much of his ire is aimed at Sega of America's management, specifically Bernie Stolar, the chief operating officer of Sega's North American Consumer Business Operations. Ireland said he was unhappy with Stolar's comments to the press and others during the show that "the



Saturn is not [Sega's] future" (taken from our own interview with Stolar). Ireland said Sega of America's management was delving out too much information about Sega's next system. "This had the effect of actively working to kill the Saturn market," Ireland said. "You just don't talk about new hardware that's at least 18 months away."

But the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back came when Ireland and the rest of his staff arrived at the show and saw where Sega had placed Working Designs' booth—on an out-of-the-way patch of show floor adjoining the exterior of Sega's walled-off area. This locale was too far off the beaten path for Ireland's tastes.

Sega of America doesn't seem too concerned about the split. "The bottom line is we've got the games developed out of Japan that could be brought to the U.S. by any publisher," said Dan Stevens, Sega's director of public relations. "There are lots of other publishers who would be interested in licensing these properties and enhancing them for the U.S. market." Stevens added that he never heard any complaints from Ireland at the show. "If he had a problem, he should have come to us directly," Stevens said.

With the show behind them, Working Designs has now turned to the other guys—and has already announced one as-yet-unnamed PlayStation RPG is in the works.

WHERE WAS THE M2?

Even though Panasonic had one of the largest booths at E3, the M2 game system was nowhere to be seen. We did run into Mr. Kenji Eno, president of Wierp Inc., the Japanese developer that was creating D2 for the M2.



EGM: Do you think the M2 will ever come out?
KENJI ENO: No. It is too late to bring out a new game system.

EGM: Why did you decide to make D2 for the M2?
KE: The first game D was originally designed for the 3DO. We worked with 3DO and had a good relationship with them. They suggested that we do the sequel for the M2. Now Matsushita has decided that they won't bring out the M2.

EGM: Did you like the M2?
KE: The M2 is the most powerful of the next-generation game systems. It has features and capabilities that the current systems do not have.

EGM: Will you convert D2 to another next-generation system such as the new Sega machine?
KE: We couldn't do D2 on any of the existing game systems because of the detail and complexity of our game.

(Editor's Note: Matsushita president Yoichi Morishita announced just before press time that they will not bring out the M2 as a game machine.)



Sega Ages (above), Albert Odyssey (right) and Lunar (top corner) will be WD's final titles for the Saturn.



Showgoers braved a potential cave-in for a peek at Crash 2.



"I just had to teach her once."
—Art Director Cyril Wachok



Now we know why the power went out on the first day of E3...



Nidway's booth was packed with shiny, happy, deadly MK people.

EGM RATES THE SHOW!

SHAWN

Favorite Games of E

There were plenty of sequels at this year's show, but there were lots of originals, too. Now that I've seen these babies, let's start getting more finished products in. X-mas season should be a blast.

- 1. Duke Nukem 3D (PC)
- 2. The Sims (PS)
- 3. Crash 2 (PS)
- 4. Metal Gear Solid (PS)
- 5. Super Mario 64 (N64)
- 6. Super Mario 64 (GC)

CRISPIN

Favorite Games of E

OK, so I didn't see anything groundbreaking (except the tape of Metal Gear Solid—wow!), but there were plenty of fresh spins on old ideas. I just wish I had more time to play the games.

- 1. Duke Nukem 3D (PC)
- 2. Metal Gear Solid (PS)
- 3. Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- 4. Gran Turismo (PS)
- 5. Super Mario 64 (N64)
- 6. Super Mario 64 (GC)

DAN

Favorite Games of E

By the last day, I was pretty much drained. I'm glad I had a pair of Vans (with Double Dr. Scholl's padding), Crisp and I had a lot of fun filming. As thing as E' was, I cannot wait until next year's.

- 1. Metal Gear Solid (PS)
- 2. Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- 3. NBA Action '98 (PS)
- 4. Pure Golf (PS)
- 5. Mario Kart (N64)
- 6. Mario Kart (GC)

SUSHI-X

Favorite Games of E

This year's show just wasn't as big a deal as last year's was, but it was still decent. I just wish Metal Gear Solid would've been playable. And where's Street Fighter III for the console?

- 1. Metal Gear Solid (PS)
- 2. Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- 3. NBA Action '98 (PS)
- 4. Pure Golf (PS)
- 5. Mario Kart (N64)
- 6. Mario Kart (GC)

E3'S BEST DEAL: THE \$99 NETLINK BUNDLE

While it won't help Sega win the hardware wars, it certainly can't hurt. At E', Sega told us they are going to put out a special deal on the NetLink.

The NetLink Bundle is going to retail for \$99. It will come with a Web browser, but more exciting, special NetLink editions of Virtual On and Sega Rally. Both these titles can be played as normal one-player games as before. But



now players can challenge anyone else in the world to a full-screen, head-to-head competition (assuming both parties own a Saturn and a NetLink). You can play two-player games without a split screen, just like in the arcade. And since you can dial straight to your opponent's NetLink, you won't have the same hassles of two-player PlayStation link cable games (i.e., having to have two TVs and systems in one location!).

Players can also enter NetLink World (assuming they have an internet service provider). Here, they can check bulletin boards (for potential NetLink opponents) or create a profile (so others



will know what they like to play and when). NetWorld's user-friendliness allows players to connect directly from NetLink World. So if you are online and find Duke Nukem 3D hot, you can click a button and NetLink will automatically connect the two players to start the game. EGM gave Virtual On and Duke Nukem 3D a hands-on test at E' and came away thoroughly impressed. The action was as smooth, without any latency. Hopefully, the NetLink will give the Saturn a slight, but much needed, edge in what it offers over the competition.

Current NetLink owners can pick up the software extras for about \$20.

E3 SCORES HIGH WITH SPORTS FANS

This year's E' was a great one for sports fans, as a dizzying array of sports titles were displayed for the first time on the show floor. As expected, Sony and EA Sports had the most impressive knapsacks—each showed a great number of impressive and diverse sports titles that revealed a few surprises.

The best way to distinguish the two major sports camps would be to draw the line between collegiate and professional sports. For instance, EA Sports nailed down the college sports with March Madness '98 and NCAA Football '98, while Sony's games consisted of pro sports such as MLB '98, NHL FaceOff '98 and the gorgeous NFL GameDay '98. Both companies displayed competing racing games—EA's NASCAR 98 and Sony's Cart World Series. While Sony's NCAA

GameBreaker '98 wasn't shown, it is in development and will be based on NFL GameDay '98's impressive 3-D engine.

Sega had a modest crop of sports games on the show floor, led by Marx TT and World Series Baseball '98 (reviewed this issue). NBA Action '98 was also playable, and already looked much cleaner and faster than the original. Interestingly enough, Midway is releasing a PlayStation game that looks identical to it called Hardwood Heroes.

Other players were showing their select sports wares. Virgin is putting the touches on NHL PowerPlay '98 (which is looking very strong), and Acclaim is



neering completion of the long-awaited N64 version of NFL QB Club '98. Interplay also showed their revamped Jimmy Johnson VR Football (Xcom) and Sega formerly owned the game engine.

After viewing the titles shown at E', it's a safe bet that this Fall is going to be an incredible season for sports games—maybe the best ever! ■



Sony's MLB '98 (left) was a pleasant surprise at the show.



A little Mario Kart competition left some feeling like big losers.



"Isn't it just that guy from 'Severely Nuts Nuts?'" —Crispin Boyer



"So, Shawn, what if you think of that Wander Woman model?"



Rescue teams are still looking for the 10 people lost in Sony's booth.

Home Conversions & Spinoffs



Arcade conversions have always been some of the hottest titles on the console systems. This show was no different. Capcom showed SFEX+ Alpha with two new characters as well as the Street Fighter Collection. Namco had Time Crisis with an entirely new level, Mace from Atari as well as Wayne Gretzky and San Francisco Rush for PS and N64 were there. Rampage by Midway was a perfect translation, and the Sub-Zero MK spinoff, Mythologies, looked great!



THE CHAMPIONS OF E³

As is the case each year at the E³ show, when large crowds gather around the best game players in the industry, it could only signify one thing, an official E³ tournament.

Capcom's Street Fighter III competition was slow to start but was certainly the flashiest. Two players at a time walked up on to a stage (surrounded by Resident Evil zombies) to play SFIII, single-elimination style. Cheers, oohs and ahhs rose up from the spectators every time they saw an impressive combo on the 10-foot tall monitors. Our very own Dan Hsu made it to the final six, which is pretty impressive considering

how little SFIII experience he has. He was eliminated by Jason Wilson, freelancer for Tips and Tricks, who went on to win the whole event. Andrew Cockburn of GameFan took second.

Namco's Tekken 3 tourney was a bit unorganized. Everyone crowded around individual machines to see what title they could (an overhead big screen would've been nice). EGM's Crispin Boyer reached the semi-finals before being knocked out by Fighters Guild writer, Glenn Addams (who then beat Paul Teng of Play by Play to become the champ).

Finally, Nintendo held a Star

Fox 64 tourney where players sat in life-size Airways and battled it out in the Battle Royal and Time Trial Modes of the game. The first- and second-place winners (Andy Reiner of Game Informer and Nob Ogassawara of Games, respectively) got to play against Shigeru Miyamoto and Takaya Imamura (the game's producer and art director). Our own John Riccardi placed just behind the winners in third place (out of 14).



Left: Glenn Addams, winner of the Tekken 3 tournament. Right: Jason Wilson, E³'s Street Fighter III champion

ARCADE GAMES AT THE E³? YOU BETCHA!

There wasn't a whole lot of "arcade" products at E³ this year. However, there was a pretty large arcade presence at the show in the form of a few machines, tournaments and a whole lot of conversions.

Probably the most impressive of the arcade games featured was Lost World: Jurassic Park by Sega. It is the first gun game to benefit from Model 3

technology, and it is incredible (perhaps to make up for the movie?).

There were two major arcade tournaments: Street Fighter III and Tekken 3 (see story above for info). Suffice it to say, Namco's parting gift—a way-cool digital organizer—was the best.

There were other arcade games that were soon to be home conversions as well, such as Mace and San Francisco Rush by Atari. Another

impressive section was the Arcade PC area, where the UFO sim Incoming was debuted and was INCREDIBLY AWESOME—thanks to 3Dfx and heavy-duty PC technology.

One game that didn't appear anywhere but a brochure was Capcom's Pocket Fighter, a blatant spinoff of Sega's Virtua Kids, but it looks cool!



Lost World by Sega really showed off the power of the Model 3 board. This title is also the first gun game that utilizes the new architecture.

PF has Ryn, Sakara, Morrigan, Donnan, Dan and more!



It wasn't all fun and games for the EGM staff (diggone declined).



As usual, Nintendo's displays were larger than life at the show.



"Hello, Conciego! Know of any good dump tapes in the area?"



This is what makes E³ the hottest show of the year...literally.

RAYSTORM™

WIN
\$10,000

CONTEST DETAILS
INSIDE PACKAGE

Eye-Popping Hyper-3D!
Two Player Simultaneous Action!
Arcade Perfect!



Twitch Games
Nothing Else!

WORKING DESIGN!

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Shigeru Miyamoto

Nintendo's Star Producer

We were given an audience with one of the greatest gaming minds of our time. He told us about his current projects.

Press: How involved are you with all of Nintendo's current games?

Shigeru Miyamoto: I'm mainly active as a producer, except for *Zelda 64*, where I'm more of a producer/director. I try to manage the general stresses of the other games.

Press: How much were you involved with *Benjo-Kazooie*?

SM: I'm very impressed by this game. Rare is really a professional company. I was not involved with this game at all.

Press: How many people and how much time did it take to make *Super Mario 64*?

SM: Five people participated in the preliminary planning stages, but in the final stages, 20 to 25 people were working on the game. It's difficult to say how long the process takes, but probably around two years. On average, 15 to 20 people worked on the game.

Press: How is *Super Mario 64 2* going?

SM: Well, *Yoshi's Island 64* is kind of a sequel

"Mario 2 might be ready next year."

(laughs). But right now I am working with a few programmers on concepts for *SM64 2*. If the concepts are good, we might have something by the end of the year.

Press: How about *Yoshi's Island 64*?

SM: It should be out before the November Shoshinkai (in Japan). I need to head back to Japan to work on this one (laughs).

Press: What do you think about *Tamagotchi*?

SM: We are currently working on a sort of life simulation game with Mr. Shigeo Ito (the story writer for *Mother/Earthbound*) called "Cabbage." We've been working on this game for five years, even before *Tamagotchi* was announced. The release date hasn't been decided but expect it in a year or two.

Press: What's happening with *Pocket Monsters 64*?

SM: This game will be released with the Nintendo 64 Disk Drive. There are currently 10 people working on it. It will be released in Japan, but I'm not sure about the U.S.

Press: What's happening with the *N64 Disk Drive*?

SM: The launch delay of the Nintendo 64 Disk Drive was not due to a hardware or software delay. We wanted to have as many titles as possible available for the launch. The launch titles for this system will be: *Mother 3*, *Pocket Monsters 64*, *Mario Paint*, *SimCity* and one

more which is currently confidential.

Press: When will *Super Mario RPG 2* come out?

SM: Depends on how many Miyamoto's there are! A team of about 20 people is working on this game. It may be out by the end of next year. *Mother 3* will be the biggest featured game at the next Shoshinkai show (in November). We'll also have a playable version of *F-Zero 64* there. We have a lot of really good titles in development so we need to prioritize which one's we'll concentrate on.

Press: Have you seen or played any interesting games?

SM: Not really. *Tamagotchi* was interesting. We showed some video of our games...and will show more in November. We hope that you can feel some of the basic strength of Nintendo 64. Many game designers are just learning how to use it. For example, each GPU can control eight different lights. Lighting effects will be shown in *Zelda 64* and *Mother 3*. High resolution video games and real time movies are other examples of the power of the N64. Nintendo 64 game designers can decide how they are going to use the power of the CPU. For example, we used it for voice compression in *Star Fox 64*. In another game it could be the light effects. You can see some of these different effects used in games on the tape.



Howard Lincoln

Chairman of Nintendo

Nintendo of America's head honcho talks about how the status of the N64 and what he thinks of the competition.

EGM: What do you see as the status of Nintendo and the N64 in gaming?

Howard Lincoln: We're very excited about the growth of the N64. It's the fastest-growing hardware system in history. Our meetings with the retailers have been extremely positive. The quality of the software for the N64 we're showing on the floor is outstanding. I think that the Miyamoto game, *Star Fox*, and the three titles from Rare—*GoldenEye*, *Benjo-Kazooie* and *Conker's Quest*—demonstrate the next level in the progression of the N64 development. And the response from the trade and the media in regard to the quality of those games has been positive. We've got a great year in store for the N64, and it's going to be a great year for the video game business as a whole. Business is up, it's probably going to get close to the \$5 billion in

"It's a quality over quantity issue."

sales in 1997, and for anybody in the video game business, that's great news.

EGM: What's the current status of the 64DD add-on for the N64?

HL: The hardware is complete, and we showed that last November at the Shoshinkai Show. Certainly we did demonstrate that we can take any N64 cartridge game and make a 64DD disk game out of it. We decided not to show the product and to delay the launch in Japan to March of 1998 and later in 1998 in the United States for the same reason: we delayed the N64—we're not satisfied with the quality of the software. It doesn't meet our standards.

EGM: Do you think that the number of games being shown for the N64—in comparison to Sony—will hurt you?

HL: I don't think so. It's a quality over quantity issue. I think we've won decisively, based on what the independent sales data demonstrates. The TRST data shows that N64 games, when measured against all of the next-generation software (Sony, Sega, Nintendo), of the top 10 games for all of 1997, seven out of the first 10 are Nintendo 64 [games]. What that means is one guy with

260 titles can't get one of those titles to sell as many as a guy with 15 titles. That proves in my mind that quality is going to win out over quantity. Having said all of that, it's also true that the breadth of N64 titles is gradually expanding, but we are not going to dump poor-quality games on the marketplace so that we can have bragging rights that we have the most games. It's like a movie studio saying, "We win the battle because we made more movies in 1997 than anybody else," as opposed to the other guy who's saying, "We only released *Gone With the Wind*! Give me a break. Who's going to win that argument? It's the same in the video game business."

EGM: Speaking of games, what's happening with *Zelda 64*?

HL: *Zelda* will reach the market in Japan before the end of the year, and it will be introduced in the U.S. in the first quarter of 1998. [Miyamoto] has to get the game done in Japan first, and he's got to make that schedule. But there's not going to be enough time for the kind of translation that is necessary to port it to the N64 in the U.S. by Christmas. And we've got great games with *Benjo-Kazooie* and *Conker's Quest*, so we think we can take the time and translate it.

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SEGA SATURN



The games go on!



Ken Kutaragi

SCEA Chairman and CEO

The man who dreamed the PlayStation is now top dog at SCEA. We asked for the scoop on PaRappa and the PlayStation 2.

Ken Kutaragi is considered by many as the father of the PlayStation.

He was the lead man who designed and headed up the team of engineers that came up with the current version of the Sony PlayStation.

On April 15 of this year, he was named chairman and chief executive officer of Sony Computer Entertainment of America. He is the third man to head the highly successful division in as many years.

Sony Computer Entertainment had a huge presence at E* in Atlanta—everywhere you went someone was buzzing about Crash Bandicoot 2, Blasto, Final Fantasy VII or PaRappa The Rapper. EGM correspondent Glenn Rubenstein was able to sit down with Kutaragi, and get his perspective on what is happening at SCEA and what his vision is for the rest of 1997 and beyond.

Like most other people who have seen it,

"PaRappa has the appeal of a movie."

Mr. Kutaragi is very excited about PaRappa The Rapper coming to the U.S., but he admitted to the marketing challenge the unique title presents.

EGM: What do you think draws gamers to PaRappa the Rapper?

Ken Kutaragi: A game's audience is usually a young adult, but PaRappa has the appeal of a movie, a great movie. It attracts a broad range of users. In Japan, 20 percent of PlayStation users are now women. I expect [the title] to have the same impact in the U.S. PaRappa the Rapper creates a new type of entertainment, and bringing the title to the United States will present a nice challenge for Sony.

The company has never before marketed a game even remotely like this one. He gives us no information about the upcoming sequel, to be released in Japan by the end of the year. Presenting a similar marketing challenge is Final Fantasy VII, the epic title by Square, which is scheduled to be released this fall on the PlayStation.

RPGs have never been huge in the U.S., unlike in Japan, where they do monster business. We are expecting FFVII to do well.

EGM: Why do you think RPGs haven't caught on over here?

KK: "The graphics, sound and detail are all very high [quality] in Final Fantasy VII, and the story line is like a great movie. But where a movie has only two-hour entertainment, Final Fantasy VII has over 70 hours. Just like the Japanese release, the U.S. release will have all of Sony's marketing muscle behind it. The title will receive a marketing and promotional push this fall.

EGM: What can you tell us about the PlayStation 2 and when will it be released?

KK: When we developed the PlayStation CD, the graphics and sound made possible many new things. Now with 64-Bit or 32-Bit, it's not that big of a jump; 32-Bit is a good number and we've got a good price. When we can do new things and make a big jump and have a competitive price, then it's time for us to release a new system.

As the conversation came to a close, Kutaragi spoke about how well the division has done and that the PlayStation was 20-30 percent of the way through its life span in the U.S. and 40 percent of the way through its life span in Japan. He also boasted that the PlayStation's revenues outgassed Sony Music in Japan, and that the next system will be going after Sony Pictures.



Bernard Stolar

COO Sega of America

We talked to Sega's chief operating officer about how he plans to turn around Sega's fortunes in the coming year.

In recent years, Sega has gone from being an industry powerhouse to an ailing giant struggling to regain ground. But here's the good news for Sega fans: At E* in Atlanta, the general consensus is that Sega's software is the best it has been in a long time—and that they could finally be at the beginning of a much-delayed comeback. With only sketchy reports of Sega's future plans, we went to Sega's chief operating officer, Bernard Stolar, to get some clarification.

EGM: What's your take on last year, the current state of the video game industry, and your position in relation to your competitors?

Bernard Stolar: Sega still today is the number one software company on a global basis. We made a mistake with the Saturn. Nintendo and Sony are fighting out their own war. And we have a business model that we're

"There will be another platform!"

following. I'm not really going to get into a hardware game with them. I don't think it's necessary—our model is quite different than their models. We're the only platform company that is doing arcade, PC titles and online—they're not even coming close to that. We're not even publishing as many titles. I think the success that people say Sony is having with their installed base is great, but at the end of the day, how much money are they going to make corporate? How much money are they going to make off the PlayStation with the amount of titles that they've got out there right now? They've got over 400 titles out there, and by the end of this year they're coming out with another 200, that's 600. They already have 15 million pieces of software unsold in the retail marketplace. When that comes tumbling back, what are they going to do with all those mark downs and price cuts that they're going to suffer? They haven't gone through the transition of how to work through that business. Sony has never been good at that—ask their record business.

EGM: What is the current status of the Saturn and will you keep supporting it?

BS: Saturn is the system we are supporting, the third parties are still publishing titles. We'll keep supporting the Saturn until the next time we start clearly focusing on where our next step on the platform side will be

Will it be next year? That depends on the software.

EGM: So is the Saturn riding out its life span for the time being?

BS: Saturn's not our future. As a company we believe that we will take the leadership role on the hardware side, as well as the software side, and it's only a matter of time. It's like CBS going from third to first.

EGM: Do you have a specific time frame?

BS: I could probably be very direct if I wasn't surrounded by Nintendo and Sony, but I would say again that it's based on software. I got a great look at what the next Sonic after Sonic R will look like and it's pretty astounding, so if we can get that to 1998, we'll be 1998, because it's got software.

EGM: Will you bring out another platform?

BS: I can tell you emphatically there will be another platform! We will be highly competitive with it. When we do that we will bring out a platform that will be price competitive, that the developers will embrace and that the retailers and the consumers will support 110 percent. And that is exciting because we will do all those things.

Thanks to VideoGameSpot's Glenn Rubenstein for conducting the interviews.

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REINVENTING THE RAIDER

SPECIAL FEATURE

THE EVOLUTION OF TOMB RAIDER 2

Eidos is unleashing Lara Croft...



with new moves,



new enemies, new toys, in a brave new world.

By Crispin Boyer

Lara Croft doesn't have to prove anything to anybody. After all, what more could you ask of this globe-trotting superkick who can flip six feet backward, draw her 12-gauge boomstick, and drop a pack of rabid wolves before her feet even hit the ground. Oh, and old we mention she looks damn good in shorts?

And Tomb Raider, her debut title, was no slouch, either. The game was a bona fide blockbuster, selling more than 2 million copies on the PlayStation, Saturn and PC platforms. It helped kick off a new genre—the third-person exploration game (usually, a 3-D adventure that uses? a Doom clone). And it sent players, sportsmen through more square miles than the Manhattan subway system.

So it's a safe bet that, even if it does nothing more than dote out new levels, Tomb Raider 2's going to launch off alone as fast even Lara's head will spin—especially since that Mario guy won't around this time to steal any of her thunder. This highly anticipated sequel is due in November, exactly one year after the original's release. And—although Saturn and N64 owners will hate to hear it—Tomb Raider 2 is a PlayStation-exclusive title, owing to publisher Eidos Interactive's tightening relationship with Sony. Still, the PC version will launch simultaneously with Sony's. And, sweat PC gamers, which make up an entirely different market, and word from Eidos is that an N64 Lara Croft game is in the works.

It's a UK-based developer, Core Design, but it'll be a different game from Tomb Raider 2.

System specifics aside, what does Core have in store for Lara this time? Well, plenty. For starters, she's coming out swinging, flipping, shooting and climbing with a few new moves and much more open worlds in which to use them. She also comes equipped with some fancy new tools and weapons, as well as variations of old favorites. (Here's a hint for those of you resisting the urge to skip ahead: The game's locally specific bonuses aren't as safe as they used to be.) Of course, Lara will need all the help she can get: Tomb Raider 2's army of enemies is considerably larger than before. You wanted more action, you got it.

But don't expect Lara to jump into a whole new genre. Let's face it—the first Tomb Raider, weekend, and Core know it. Consequently, the same level designers who crafted the first





1 Like in the original, most puzzles require you to get from point A to point B. **2** "Hmmm," Lara ponders, "how do I get up there?" **3** "I have to leap way over there!" **3** "Great. Now how do I get back down?"

game's works are working on the sequel, while the programmer of the original's Saturn version is taking care of the coding. "Essentially, the heart of the original team remains the same," said Andrew Thompson, Core's operations manager. "However, this team has grown and, although a couple of original members have left, the Tomb Raider 2 team still outnumber the original."

When the developers reunited to reinvent the raider, they opted to take more of a tweaking approach instead of rebuilding the game from a polygon one. The result, Tomb Raider 2 packs the same gameplay as the first, except in a much slicker package.

But more on that later. Let's see what kind of trouble Lara has gotten herself into this time.

Croft's New Crusade

The trophy of this adventure is an ancient, razor-sharp Chinese artifact called the Dagger of Xian. The buzz on this centuries-old knockback goes something like this: He who jabs the dagger into his heart will gain the power of a dragon. Legendary Chinese emperor Qin Shihuang is believed to

have once wielded the dagger—at least until it was seized by Tibetan warrior monks. Long ago, these monks placed the dagger in its resting place deep within the Great Wall of China, where the game opens.

A magical dagger? Exotic locales? Sounds right up Lara's alley, right? Trouble is, an army of enemies is keen on the dagger, too, including the members of Fama Nera, a cult that worships the artifact's mythical powers.

Lara runs into these masked fanatics early in the game, while climbing through the labyrinthine passageways within the Great Wall. She also discovers a door locked by a bizarre code-wheel mechanism that bars both her and the cult members from reaching the dagger.

So she's off to Venice, to the mansion of the late magician Gianni Bartoli, who Lara learned spent his life collecting the Chinese emperor's mystical toys. Lara expects to find clues to the code wheel's workings in Bartoli's expansive estate. Instead, she finds scurrying rats, more cult members, their guard dogs and plenty of traps. She also runs into her new nemesis, Marco Barletta, the dead magician's son and yet another seeker of the lost dagger.

Next up, Lara plunges into the dark, waterlogged corridors of a sunken ship, supposedly Bartoli's watery grave. Here—clad in her sporty, skin-tight wetsuit—she'll face scuba divers, sharks, eels and enough other aquatic nightmares to pack Sweeps Month on the Discovery Channel. Not to worry, Lara can bite back with her speargun.

The wrecked ship packs another twist, though—it settled belly up when it sank to the ocean floor. So, like an athletic Shelly Winters from the *Proseidien Adventure*, Lara must scramble, climb and leap across the inverted ship's ceiling. To make matters even more challenging, the sunken ocean liner is one of the darkest areas in the game. If Lara doesn't nab a few boxes of flares (see sidebar), she'll soon have reason enough to fear the dark.

Finally, Lara heads back to solid, but by no means safe, ground at the game's finale, when she scales the steep, icy cliffs of the Tibetan outbreak. Here she'll trek to a monastery guarded by patrolling cult members and roving bandits on the hunt for the

POLYGONAL PLASTIC SURGERY

In the first *Tomb Raider*, Lara Croft's in-game physique looked blocky but good. All of her equipment was in the right place, sure, but "panty" was really the best word to describe her figure. Now, though, Core knows they have more than just a game character on their hands. After all, Lara is an international sex symbol and covergirl. So this time around the developers have



Packing extra polys in all the right places, *Tomb Raider 2*'s Lara (left) is a far sight shapelier than the original (right).

given her a makeover. They've pumped up her polygon count and remapped her with more detailed textures. The result: Lara's face, clothing and body all look more rounded and natural, but Core didn't stop with the body. They've given her a real-life ponytail that flails about in response to her head and body movements. This two-foot-long rope of hair trails behind

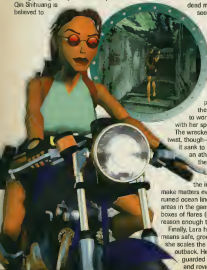


Lara dresses a little more sensibly in her second adventure. Expect to see three costume changes, possibly more.



her when she runs or falls, and it'll even wrap around her neck once in a while.

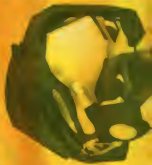
Core has also expanded Lara's wardrobe, giving her the right gear for the job. For her trek through the sunken ship stage, Lara dons a black wetsuit with red trim. And she slips into a leather bomber jacket when she scales Tibet's icy plateaus. Yeah, right. Like sub-zero temperatures actually bother the tough-as-nails heroine.



TOMB RAIDER

2

STARRING
LARA CROFT





ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

From Avatar 3, Call of Duty, Left 4 Dead and the Madden and EA Sports franchises and more... © 2008 Electronic Arts Inc.

ENEMIES, ENEMIES EVERYWHERE

Gamers of the more trigger-happy variety all shared a common gripe about the original *Tomb Raider*—there just weren't enough bad guys for Lara to ventilate with her very big guns. Not so with the sequel.

Although *Tomb Raider 2*'s levels aren't exactly crawling with critters, Lara does face more than twice as many as before—and in a much greater variety. On land, she'll go up against rats, crows, eagles, spiders, dobermans, tigers and even the occasional yeti (who just may be out for revenge, considering that—during the first game's opening cinema—we learned Lara brought down none other than Bigfoot

herself). *Tomb Raider 2*'s submerged areas aren't beast-free, either: Lara's underwater exploits will plunge her into encounters with barracuda, eels, sharks and other deep-sea nightmares. (At least now she has the right tool—her trusty speargun—to deal with these wet threats.)

But particularly problematic for our heroine will be the deadliest of the species—humans—whom Lara must battle more than any other creature. From the masked members of the fanatical Fima cult to the no-neck guards of the ocean rig, *Tomb Raider 2*'s motley collection of tough guys pop up everywhere, rarely letting Lara explore all by her lonesome.

As in the first game, she'll often deal with only a single—usually gun-

wielding—enemy at a time. These badies usually appear from out of nowhere, such as from behind a door or broken window. But sometimes a gang of humans will surround her, forcing Lara to flip, shoot, flip, shoot until the mob has been dispatched. Even worse—a few human enemies are more than what they seem (oh, what rough scaly skin and big reptilian eyes you have, Mr. Bad Guy). But you'll just have to guide Lara to the final levels to see these bad boys for yourself.

Also as in *Tomb Raider*, every critter in this sequel's zoo is convincingly animated. Dobermans snarl, tigers pounce, spiders scurry—heck, you'd think Gore struck out into the wilderness and moon-captured the wildlife. But, as in the first game, each animal was animated by hand (except this time by a new team of artists).



monastery's treasures. Lara will also return to her tomb roots beneath the monastery, where she must navigate miles of eerie, claustrophobia-inducing catacombs.

Like in the first game, each chapter of *Tomb Raider 2* opens with a rendered cinema. Brief, in-game sequences will keep the story moving when Lara stumbles upon a significant artifact or confronts particularly important enemies. Lara will have more run-ins with shady characters the time around, and not all of them will be enemies. Yet don't expect any partners—Lara's one gal who likes to work alone.

Lara plays outside

Boil down *Tomb Raider 2*'s story line and you'll see it's set in four far-flung locales—the Great Wall, Venice, the sunken ship and a Tibetan monastery. Like in *Tomb Raider*, these worlds are divided into three or four levels apiece, giving the sequel 12 levels in all. But unlike the original, whose 12 stages formed one big subterranean playground, *Tomb Raider 2*'s worlds are more open and less...well, tomblike.

In fact, several levels are set outside, where Lara can go about her business under a sky that was always hidden by stone ceilings in the first game. In the Venice level, for instance, Lara will spend much of her time leaping from balcony to balcony and up the sides of buildings. The Tibetan level, too, starts out with Lara clambering along cliffsides and up mountain peaks.

Still, a good portion of *Tomb Raider 2* is set indoors. But instead of the caves and ruins of the first game, most new levels take Lara to decidedly man-made places. She'll trek through the dark, tapestry-lined hallways of the Venice mansion and the

THE NEW TOOLS OF TOMB RAIDING



area that needed very little tweaking. "We looked at all aspects of the original game and, where possible, improved and enhanced the feel, and the control is no exception," Thompson said. "[Lara's] movement has been worked on to give it a smoother, more efficient feel. We have added the climb move, and [Lara] will also be able to wade in water rather than be either in or out of it."

So, yes, Lara retains all her original moves, and they follow the same control scheme from part one (Core currently has no plans to make the game analog compatible, since Lara's

leaps often require you to tap, tap, tap her to a certain position on platforms).

Even new tricks like the climb—activated by the same button that makes Lara grab ledges and pick up objects—will feel natural to *Tomb Raider* veterans. But what if you haven't played the first game?

Don't worry—Core has once again devoted a level to teaching would-be Laras the basics.

"Yes, we will have a training level," Thompson

Lara fears neither aquatic beasts nor the dark in *Tomb Raider 2*—thanks to a couple of new toys Core has added to her arsenal.

First up is the speargun, which lets Lara stick it to the sharks, barracudas, eels and other underwater critters before they cruise within biting range. Fans of the first game will especially appreciate this weapon, since *Tomb Raider* left Lara without a means of defending herself while swimming.

Even better are the flares Lara will find scattered throughout each level. These little torches push back the darkness and really show off the game's dynamic lighting effects. Considering that *Tomb Raider 2* is often much darker than the original, a



Lara's flare is the game's coolest new tool. Its glow will pick out secret doors (top), and Lara can chuck flares into dark rooms to catch a glimpse of the dangers within.




omote temples of the Tibetan monastery, as well as clamber up bookshelves in a dusty, rat-infested library.

She's got to move it, move it


When it came time to tinker with Lara's moves, the developers knew this was one





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if it ain't BROKEN...

said, "but it will be in a different location than it was in the original, so even experienced players will enjoy brushing up on their skills before setting off on their adventure."

Let there be light

We've saved the most profound enhancement to *Tomb Raider 2* for last—and it isn't any new move that Lara can do. Instead, it's a trick the developers have built into the graphics engine: dynamic lighting. Whereas the original game faked its lighting effects, *Tomb Raider 2* glows with realistic light sources. Lara's flares and the muzzle flashes of her guns are the most vibrant examples.

The dynamic lighting has allowed Core's level designers to come up with more creative uses for darkness. Consequently, Lara will stumble through several pitch-black environments, and the entire game has a much gloomier feel than the original.

When Lara wanders into the dark, her flares become the most important puzzle-solving tool in her arsenal. Without them, she could wander past a switch or miss an important clue written on a wall—not to mention walk blindly into a spiked pit. And Lara's ability to throw flares opens new puzzle possibilities, too. She could walk to the end of a ledge, for instance, and toss her torch into the abyss to see what lies far below.

With its dynamic lighting, outdoor levels, twofold increase in enemies and new weapons and moves, *Tomb Raider 2* is easily shaping up to be a worthy sequel to the original. Still, the success of the first game is a lot to live up to. And when you're creating a sequel to a game that helped establish a genre, there has to be plenty of extra stress on the team, right?

Thompson's not so sure. "I don't think the pressure is any different from the original title," he said. "I'm probably just breathing a little heavier down the back of the team's necks."

If the team members are anywhere near as tough as their game's star, they probably welcome the pressure. ■

Lara leaps, flipped, swam, shimmied, shoved, pulled, dived and tumbled her way through *Tomb Raider*—and Core is keeping her acrobatic, Prince of Persia-inspired prowess intact for the sequel. She can perform all of her signature moves from the original—yes, even the *lithé-à-vous-dé-à-in-the-wrong-place* dive and the suggestive, hoist-over-head pull-up that's useless but fun to watch.

The same joyed commands are used to put Lara through her motions, if you mastered the first game's controls, you won't have any problems in part two. And the old moves look pretty much the same as they did in *Tomb Raider*, except with smoother animation.

So Core deserves kudos for having enough sense to leave well enough alone. After all, it's Lara's basic arsenal of moves that makes her world at times easy, at times challenging to explore (but then, you already knew that if you had the patience to board and flip your way to the temple roof in the first game's Lost World level).



Sure, we've seen all these tricks before, but Lara just wouldn't be the same without them. And with the same moves come the same tactics of the original. Who attacked (hey), stay airborne with front, side and back flips. Only then can Lara dodge the clubs, bullets and teeth of the bad guys.



...just add NEW MOVES

Of course, *Tomb Raider 2* wouldn't be much of a sequel if Lara didn't learn a few new tricks during her vacation between games. And New Trick Number One is a doozy: She can now ascend their vertical walls as easily as a spider scooting up your bedroom wall.

But don't expect to breech through the game simply by high-tailing it up the nearest wall to reach the level exit or evade enemies; Lara can only climb certain surfaces that look well, climbable (much like Gex is his forthcoming 3-D adventure). Don't worry—scalable surfaces usually stick out from their surroundings. Library bookshelves and rocky walls, for instance, are ribbed with handholds for Lara's climbing pleasure.

Initiating a climb is easy enough: Just place Lara at the base of a wall and hit the Action button (the same one used to push/pull blocks and grab onto ledges), then push up on the joystick. Lara will go into her climbing stance and begin her ascent. You can stop the climb at any time by releasing the joystick. Lara will cling to the wall like a fly, or scurry right or left if you push in that direction. As with all her moves, Lara's vertical scramble is graceful and extremely well animated. She follows the classic three-point form advocated by mountain climbers everywhere (or at least by those who don't fall a lot).

Other moves are less spectacular (actually, they fall into the "tweaking" category). You can now make Lara wade through waist-deep water rather than simply swim through it. This move looks nice but adds little to the gameplay. And standing vertical jumps onto low platforms are a little easier to pull off, since Lara now automatically steps forward onto low ledges when she leaps.



Going up! Lara's climbing skills open new gameplay possibilities. Oh, and she can wade now, too. Wow...we guess.



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NINTENDO⁶⁴



N64



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Straight to the CORE...

With no less than three high-profile games in development—Fighting Force, Ninja and, of course, Tomb Raider 2—Core Design's Derby, England-based offices have been thrown into hyperdrive. We snagged Andrew Thompson, Core's operations manager, between tea times and deadlines for the word

on Lara's next big adventure.

EGM: How long have you been working on Tomb Raider 2 compared to the first game?

Andrew Thompson: The development of the original title took somewhere in the region of 18 months. The sequel will take slightly less. Quite literally, work on TR2 started even before the completion of the first game. When you're nearing the end of development, there are so many suggestions and ideas that are generated both from the team and externally. Some ideas can be incorporated into the original game; some, inevitably, cannot. It is these ideas—together with the new objectives and story line—that have gone into the production of Tomb Raider 2.

EGM: Was there any see gripe about the first game that really hit home, and what have you done about it?

AT: We were very pleased that a game the size of TR received very little criticism. There were small graphical glitches which we have addressed. Perhaps the

most common comment concerned the camera. We have worked very hard to stabilize the camera, as we found it had a tendency to swing a little during play.

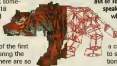
EGM: Why did you take some of the tomb out of Tomb Raider 2, so to speak? In other words, why is one-fourth of the game set outdoors?

AT: There wasn't a conscious decision to set the game locations away from the tomb feet. The new story line simply takes Lara to a more varied and man-made style of location—although in the mountainous regions of Tibet you will have a tomb or two to explore.

EGM: By what degree will Lara's new moves enhance or open up the gameplay?

AT: Lara's new moves really do open up the design possibilities in TR2. The addition of the climb means that a whole new dimension is available to her. She's no longer confined to a certain jump height, for example.

EGM: How big are the sequel's levels compared to the first game's? Do you know how large they are, say, in miles?



Core's Tomb Raider 2 team (top) includes: Stuart Atkinson, graphic artist/animations; Gavin Ramsey, lead PC programmer; James Gosling, lead PlayStation programmer; Lara Croft, star; Jason Charnot, graphic artist/animations; Andrew Hines, PC programming support; Neal Boyd, graphic artist; and Heather Gibson, graphic artist. Their Derby, England-based studios (left) look more like a mansion than an office complex. "We managed to evict the Queen in order to secure this residence," joked Thompson, "although we kept the servants and maids. After all, someone has to serve high tea."

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"The levels of TR2 will be even larger than those of the original game. It's virtually impossible to give a size for each level in terms of miles, but I know I wouldn't want to jog around them."

—Andrew Thompson, operations director

AT: The levels of TR2 will if anything be even larger than those of the original game. It's virtually impossible to give a size for each level in terms of miles, but I know I wouldn't want to jog around them.

EGM: Where did you find the inspiration for the new levels? Any road trips?

AT: Where does anyone find inspiration? There are nine members on the TR2 team who each played a part in the construction of the story line. Fifty other colleagues here in Derby were only too happy to pass on ideas, and, of course, there are the TR fans who have, quite literally, e-mailed in their thousands of ideas. All of these opinions and suggestions have to a certain degree helped shape the feel of TR2.

EGM: What about the plot—is it based on fact or 100 percent fiction?

AT: The story line, as in the original game, has both fact and fiction elements in its composition.

EGM: The sequel has more enemies. Is this in response to pleas from action-oriented gamers who wanted more critters to kill? And is the higher ratio of human enemies due to any outcry from animal rights groups who didn't like Lara hunting cute, fuzzy animals in the original?

AT: Again, the story line for TR2 really dictated the style and amount of enemies you will encounter during the game. Wo-

don't view TR2 as a shooter, but it is inevitable that with so many human-style characters—and, indeed, baddies in general—that it could be viewed as so. Just remember: those cute and fuzzy animals in TR weren't exactly household-pet material, were they?

EGM: The first game had swinging blades, rolling boulders, dart launchers, drop-away floors, spiked pits—just about every type of obstacle imaginable. What tricks could you possibly have left?

AT: Now that really is the \$64,000 question, isn't it, and placing \$64,000 in my account may wrestle a few of the answers from me. If not you'll just have to wait and see!

EGM: Will there be differences between the PC and PlayStation versions of Tomb 2?

AT: There will not really be any major differences in graphic appearance other than the obvious smooth and sharper appearance of the accelerated-graphics card PC version.

EGM: What do you think is the secret to Lara's allure?

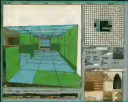
AT: I think she appeals to many different people for many different reasons. She is undoubtedly an intelligent and sexy woman who is strongly independent and perfectly capable of looking after herself.

EGM: We gotta ask—is Lara a hidden character in Fighting Force?

AT: No, Lara doesn't actually appear in FF, but if you look closely you will see that a fan of hers obviously lives in one of the FF locations.

EGM: Where do you see Lara going in the future? Perhaps a film?

AT: Who knows. I think we all strongly believe that the sky's the limit for her. ■



Core's level designers are getting a little help this time from a new, custom-built level editor that lets them explore each stage as it is created. The result: They can test play levels on the fly and eliminate glitches, align mismatched rocks and make sure puzzles aren't too outrageously hard.



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N64



GOLDENEYE 007

N64 Owners Get A License To Kill

Everybody's favorite secret agent is about to finally make his long-overdue appearance on the Nintendo 64, courtesy of Nintendo and Rare. After almost two years of development, GoldenEye 007 was recently shown to us at the EGM Offices in near-complete form.

GoldenEye 007 is a first-person shooting game (similar to *Turok* or *Doom*) that follows the movie of the same name's basic plot and takes place in similar locations throughout the world. Each of the game's 18 stages begins with a detailed mission briefing that includes a list of objectives that must be carried out in order to complete the stage. The amount of objectives per stage will depend on which of the three difficulty levels you choose before play (obviously, the harder the difficulty, the more objectives). The cool thing about GoldenEye though, is that even

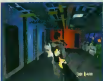
if you choose an easier level and only have to do say, one or two things on a particular stage, you can still complete the other, more difficult tasks if you wish—a welcome feature indeed.

And just like any super agent, Bond is armed to the teeth. Not only does he have the usual assortment of nifty gadgets from Q (pressing Start will pull up Bond's wristwatch, complete with a subscreen full of interesting items that can be used on the various stages), he can collect from over 15 different weapons including Sniper Rifles, Machine Guns, Throwing Knives, Hand Grenades and more. And since the game works with the Rumble Pak, you'll feel every shot and explosion in the game as if you were right there in the middle of the action (sorry if that sounds like a press release, but it's true).

Graphically, GoldenEye looks great, with the best use of textures yet on the N64, and a seemingly infinite horizon that you can look into (with hardly any fog, yay!). The music isn't too shabby

With the Selzer Rifle, 007 can pick off enemies from quite a distance.

Certain weapons can be picked up twice for some Woo-style action.



either, with various remixes of the traditional Bond theme and music taken straight from the movie.

Also worth mentioning is the fantastic Four-player Mode, which came as a complete surprise—it's one of the best Four-player Modes (if not the best) on the N64 yet.

For more on that, check out the Gamer's Edge sidebar located on this page.

GoldenEye 007 is due out in August, and we'll be back next month with the lowdown when the Review Crew gets their hands on the final version. ■

Gamer's EDGE 004-Player Action

GoldenEye's main Four-player Modes are themed after past 007 movies. Some are more fun than others, but each provides a unique flavor not often found in a game of this type. Here's a rundown of the four "themed" modes that are available from the start of the game (there may or may not be hidden ones that can be accessed later—we didn't find any before deadline).

You Only Live Twice: The name says it all. You die twice, and you're out.

The Living Daylights: Also known as "Flag Tag." The object is to find the white flag and hold onto it for as long as possible. The catch? When you've got the flag, you can't fire any weapons (Uh-oh!).

The Man With the Golden Gun: There's a Golden Gun hidden away in the stage—find it (and Golden Bullets as well),

and you can take out anyone with a single bullet; only to be stalked by everyone once you get it!

License to Kill: This time, every gun can take out anyone with one bullet! Talk about intense...

In addition to the themed modes, there are 2-on-2, 3-on-1 and 2-on-1 Team Battle Modes as well.



GoldenEye's nifty new Four-player Modes are a blast to play.



If you search around in the Ramsey stage, you'll find a loaded tank!

PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	Rare
THEME	Shooter
PLAYERS	1-4
% COMPLETE	90%
RELEASE DATE	August
ALSO ON	N64

WILD
9

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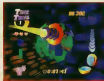
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N64



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When the camera zooms in, you know you're running out of time.

TETRISPHERE

The Jaguar's Loss Is The N64's Gain

Tetrisphere is a bold attempt to bring the puzzle genre to new heights and dimensions. It takes classic elements from classic games and puts them together for yet another title that is bound to suck up countless hours from puzzle game fans everywhere.

You can immediately see why the game is called Tetrisphere. All of the playing pieces' shapes come from the original Alexey Pajitnov addictive puzzler (remember the square, long block and T- and Z-shaped blocks?).

Choose two to five types of these playing pieces for each game. These blocks interlock to form layers of a large sphere. Your goal is to remove these polygonal parts sections at a time to expose the inner core.

Like many other puzzle games, you have a queue of playing pieces to drop. To remove the shapes on the sphere, you must first slide them around to match others of its

kind. Once you do so, you then drop your piece (from the queue) in the right spot to blast away that area of the surface. Naturally, the more shapes you remove with each drop, the higher your score.

But simply lining up pieces to remove them won't cut it for most experienced puzzle gamers. That's why H2O also included bigger and badder ways to score points, remove blocks and hurt your opponents (in two-player vs. games), combos. Gravity combos are based on the simple concept of letting falling blocks form further matches (as seen in typical cascading puzzle games like Tetris Attack or Kirby's Avalanche). If you match and clear a group of pieces, any other pieces resting on top of the disappearing blocks may fall toward the center of the sphere to fit into a new match, thus causing a Gravity combo. Fuse combos are a bit more difficult to describe. A block that you drop to clear other blocks is called a fuse. You can pull a fuse away to clear another set of blocks

elsewhere. Doing so successfully will cause a Fuse Combo. Both Gravity and Fuse Combos increase your score dramatically, and in two-player games, will drop a great deal of garbage blocks on your opponent (which makes it harder for him or her to win).

Tetrisphere also has power-ups that clear out large groups of pieces at once. Tetrisphere's "Magic" include missiles, dynamite and magnets which destroy wide areas of the sphere. But unlike other puzzle games that give you power-ups at random, Tetrisphere makes you work for them (you can pick up Magic by setting up long chains and combos).

Being the first puzzle game for the Nintendo 64, Tetrisphere will be a fairly high-profile title (as high profile as puzzle games can get anyway). Now that the N64 has a healthy installed base, it will be interesting to see how well a game from a traditionally smaller genre will do. Make sure to read this issue's Review Crew to see what we think of the game. ■

Gamer's EDGE

NO PHEAR

Tetrisphere used to be called Tetrisphere and before that, simply Phear. This game started as a 64-Bit title, but its growing years were not all spent on the Nintendo 64.

Phear was originally an Atari Jaguar game. It was first seen by the public at the 1995 Winter CES (Consumer Electronics Show). Back then Nintendo was looking to secure a few key titles for several key genres, one of them being the puzzle game. They saw Phear on the Jaguar, liked it, made an offer and secured rights to bring it out exclusively for the Nintendo 64.



Tetrisphere has a very challenging (and frustrating) Puzzle Mode.



A simple training session shows the basics of setting up combos.

PUBLISHER	Nintendo
DEVELOPER	H2O
THEME	Puzzle
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	50%
RELEASE DATE	August
ALSO ON	None



The original Phear for the doomed Jaguar.

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N64



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AEROFIGHTERS ASSAULT

Look Out! Bogey On My 64!

The first flight combat game for the N64 will be making its way to the U.S. later this year thanks to MoD/River, the U.S. branch of Japan's Video System Co., Ltd. Aerofighters Assault (known as Sonic Wings Assault in Japan) is the latest addition to a long-running series of games that spans from the arcade to the Neo-Geo to the Saturn and the PlayStation and even the Super NES. While most of the past Aerofighters games were 2-D arcade-style shooters, AFA takes on a completely new look: 3-D.

Similar in overall presentation to Namco's Ace Combat 2 for the PlayStation, Aerofighters (which is being developed by Paradigm, creators of PilotWings 64) lets you take the role of one of four fighter pilots, each with its own unique aircraft, to do battle against the evil Phutts Morgana and his powerful forces. After you choose your ace, the remaining three pilots will become wingmen and help you out during your missions (similar to how the

wingmen in Star Fox 64 help out).

There are 10 missions in total in the Main Game Mode (some of which are hidden and/or bonus missions), each with varying objectives. The first stage involves flying through Tokyo (with realistic landscapes—even the Tokyo Tower stands tall in all its glory) to locate and destroy a huge spider-like mech while defending the Metropolitan building. Another stage is set high in the sky against a huge flying fortress and its escort aircraft. There are defense missions as well—like the Shuttle Defense stage where the object is to protect a space shuttle from attack long enough for it to get off

the ground and into space.

Other modes of play included in AFA are a Two-player Split-screen Dogfight Mode (Death Match), a special Training Mode that allows you to practice your maneuvering, your skill against an AI pilot (a dogfight with the CPU), or your skill against one of the game's Bosses, and finally, a Boss Attack Mode that wasn't yet implemented in the preview copy we received.

Aerofighters Assault is expected to ship sometime in October, and while the game could still use a bit of work in certain areas (particularly the overall size of some of the maps, which seemed rather small when compared to those in

Ace Combat 2), the overall package does look promising. On a final note, the game will support the Rumble Pak, so expect to really feel it when Morgana's forces send your aircraft hurtling into the side of a mountain (Duch!) ■

PUBLISHER	MoD/River
DEVELOPER	Paradigm
THEME	First Combat
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	August
ALSO ON	N64

Gamer's EDGE

The Aerofighters

There are four main members of the Aerofighters International Forces: Hawk, with his F-14B Tomcat; Hien, who flies an FS-X; Volk, manning the SU-26 Super Flanker; and Glendia and her A-10A Thunderbolt II (not very befitting of a woman, but...). There are also two hidden pilots that will become available after you meet certain requirements during the game.



Hien: FS-X



Hawk: F14B Tomcat



Volk: SU-26 Super Flanker



Glendia: A-10A Thunderbolt II

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Finally, there's violence on T.V. worth getting excited about. That's because NAKI's new Red Sight Laser Target System gives you total shooting control. Blow away enemies cowering behind obstacles, pick out terrorists without killing hostages — any time the situation demands pinpoint accuracy, you've gotta power up the Red Sight Laser. There's simply no alternative.

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SATURN



Last BRONX

Now This Is A Rumble In The Bronx

Here's a quick peek at Red Eye, the final Boss, as he's about to kill you.

Saturn owners hoping for a game like Soul Blade (the one by Namco for the PlayStation) to come out for their Sega 32-Bit system don't have to wait any longer—put up your dukes and get ready for Last Bronx by Sega. They say anyone who plays the game will "experience the all-out brawl of gang fighting."

(What's "gang fighting" anyway?)

Don't expect to gang fight somewhere in New York City, though. The strange thing about the game (or at least the game's name) is that it takes place in Tokyo. In fact, scenery in the various arenas is from Tokyo, like buildings, billboards and other landmarks. Perhaps the game is inspired by the hit Jackie Chan action film, *Rumble in The Bronx*.

Last Bronx is a 3-D fighting game with the same awesome, hi-res look that *Virtua Fighter 2* has. The two main differences with Last Bronx are that 1) each character takes a weapon of some kind and 2) the frame rate is fast, making the game play like *Tekken 2* or *Soul Blade*.

With this quick animation, players won't feel like they're floating through the air when they jump. Combine this with weapon attacks that make you orange and Sega might just have a winner here. But to really know what it's like, you'll have to play it.

Whether your character uses Sa or a Double Stick, the result is the same: pain. But what else is



If you're not quick enough on the Block button expect to be thrown.

expected from a fighting game? Last Bronx has characters who use real-life weapons to "help" the opponent to the ground. Players can pick characters who use San Set Sukon (which is a suburban staff), Nun Choku (or the Americanized way, "nunchucks"), Ton Fahs (like police clubs) and last but not least, the wooden mallet (that's kind of traditional isn't it?)

To use all of these killer weapons takes a band of skilled fighters, and Last Bronx comes through on this account as well. Featuring eight fighters to choose from—each with his or her own style of fighting—players shouldn't have a problem finding someone to kick their friend's butt with.

But Last Bronx isn't just a two-player game obviously. The One-player Mode allows gamers to fight through seven other scruffy-looking roughs all the way to Red Eye, the game's final Boss (who becomes playable once the game



This guy can't help but be thrown around a lot—maybe he likes to fly.

is finished). Expect other secrets in the title once the game is closer to completion—we'll pass along anything we find to you.

During all modes of play, the game has dramatic a camera angle that changes to show the best view of the carnage (or in some cases the best view of someone's underwear). This happens while a player uses one of the hold moves—which are really cool by the way.

If Sega comes through with more titles like this one, their future may light up a little more. After all, we can't deny that it's a bit dim these days. ■

PUBLISHER	Sega
DEVELOPER	Sega
THEME	Fighting
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	30%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

Gamer's EDGE

Ads In The BG

As mentioned, Last Bronx has landmarks and scenery from Tokyo. But we here at EGM have noticed a couple other things floating in the background that make us wonder if these are things that are really on buildings or if it's a new type of advertisement (for themselves as well as a couple other companies). They include:

- Crystal Geyser bottled water
- The Tokyo Corp. (I guess that's real.)
- Sonic the Hedgehog on the side of a building.



SATURN



If you ignite the ship's cannons, you can hit the squid for extra points.



Behind The SCREENS

Sega sure knows how to get the EGM and EGMF offices stirred up. In a couple of weeks, they are visiting us to throw a big Bomberman tournament. The Video Game Group winner will receive a genuine Bomberman leather bomber jacket, courtesy of Sega of America. Sure we'd all love to win the jacket, but frankly, we like having an excuse to play 10-player Bomberman during office hours. "Work??? We have a tournament to practice for!!"

BOMBERMAN

The Ultimate In 10-player Mayhem

Don't be fooled by the screen shots on this page. Saturn Bomberman may look childish and simplistic, perhaps even archaic, but this multiplayer 2-D action game is one of the best of its kind. This classic series finally gets a next-generation system update, and will be coming out for the U.S. Saturn this fall.

Bomberman is a game that's extremely easy to pick up and extremely difficult to put down

The concept is so simple and addicting, hardcore gamers and video game phobics can't resist playing the game. The goal of Bomberman is to plant bombs to kill your opponents. You can use the layout of each stage to your advantage. Certain walls cannot be blown up and will stop an explosion in its tracks, so use these for cover.

Other than walls, destructible blocks make up the rest of the map. By removing these, you can find power-up icons that can help

or hinder your progress. These power-ups will let you: Lay score than one bomb at a time, create bigger explosions, kick bombs down straightaways, toss bombs over walls, run faster or ride a dinosaur (see sidebar).

Saturn Bomberman contains three modes of play: Normal, Master and Battle. The first two are simple games in which you attempt to advance through various stages by killing off computer drones. Between each world, you'll have to defeat large Bosses in order to advance.

The Battle Mode, however, is the *real* reason to buy the game. Any combination of up to 10 computer or human opponents (with the help of two multitaps) can fight it out in special arenas.

The sheer number of options available prove that this latest Bomberman is indeed an improvement over its predecessors. You can have a bonus game (where the winner can play a crane redemption-style game to win a

power-up for the next stage), a devil power-down (if it gets picked up, everyone receives a curse that will affect their game adversely) and/or mad bombers (if you are eliminated, you can still play by tossing random bombs into the arena). You can also play in teams in this version of Bomberman.

This will almost certainly be one of the best multiplayer games ever. The Super Bomberman series were big hits as four-player games, and now the Saturn scores big with a monstrous 10-player version. Find some friends, a couple of multitaps and a bunch of Saturn controllers. ■

Gamer's EDGE

The newest additions to the Bomberman family are a pack of cute dinosaurs. By picking up an egg, you will get one of five random dinos to ride on. Each subsequent egg you touch will upgrade your steed (they can be upgraded twice). These dinos give you a special skill, which increase in power with

each upgrade. Not only that, having a dinosaur allows you to take an extra hit in combat (but then you lose your little friend, of course).



Pink Dino: jumps over walls, bombs and explosions.



Blue Dino: kicks bombs over walls and blocks.



Purple Dino: alters blocks so they'll always have a power-up when you pass by.



Green Dino: runs in a straight line until he hits an obstacle.



Yellow Dino: screams and stuns an opponent.

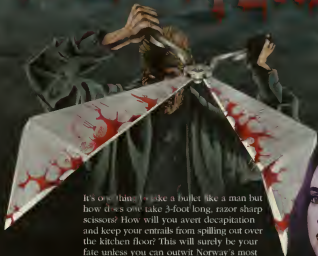


The special 10-player map is best played on a big-screen television.



The Bonus Game awards winners with a power-up for the next match.

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It's one thing to take a bullet like a man but how does one take 3-foot long, razor sharp scissors? How will you avert decapitation and keep your entrails from spilling out over the kitchen floor? This will surely be your fate unless you can outwit Norway's most lethal killer—Scissorman. You'll have to become a master of stealth and deception to avoid being cut to ribbons in this blood-soaked horror adventure.

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PLAYSTATION



FINAL FANTASY VII

The RPG Of The Year Is Almost Here

After months of waiting, the most anticipated RPG in history is finally nearing completion. That's right, Final Fantasy VII, Square's biggest and best masterpiece yet, just arrived in our offices only moments before deadline in near-complete form. Obviously we've already covered the game in-depth several times (from the announcement back in early '96 to the Japanese release in early '97 up until right now), so there's not much new to offer, but we can at least take a more in-depth look into the game's story line and more importantly, the writing in the English version.

If you're a subscriber to Sony's special *Underground* CD Magazine, you've most likely already played the updated demo of Final Fantasy VII that was included with *Underground* No. 2. The story, in a nutshell, involves an underground resistance group known as the Apsalanzo and their



The overworld has two views—an overhead view and a fully 3-D view.



The most impressive display of graphical power in FFVII comes in the form of the various call spells you can cast, like Shiva and Ifrit (shown here).



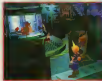
battle to rid the land of the corrupt Shinra Corporation, who are using Mako (in form of energy in the world of FFVII) for their own greedy purposes, which is in effect, sucking the life right out of the planet.

The first thing we noticed when playing is that, unlike past Final Fantasy games in the U.S., the text seems to be a direct translation of the Japanese version. For those of you who are scratching your head, this is a good thing. In past FF games, there were items taken out to make the game easier for U.S. audiences; there were parts of the story that were altered because of cultural differences, and there were various forms of censorship in the text. For example, anything with the word "Death" was changed to "Doom," and "holy" artifacts were mysteriously changed to "what's boss." Fortunately, that's no longer the case. Even GI, the loim of currency in the Japanese FF games, was left unchanged in FFVII. Strangely

enough, the things you WOULD expect to be changed, like language, are untouched. So far, we've been able to play about 20 hours in, and Barret's said a certain four-letter word just as many times. Other, less rash expletives are used as well, but nothing that hasn't been seen before in a video game. It should be noted, however, that Sony is still (as of this writing) evaluating the in-game text with SquareSoft, so anything could change by the time the game hits store shelves. This is nothing out of the ordinary in Japan—the type of language and even minor rudity is common in everyday TV

shows, magazines and, yes, video games. We applaud Sony and SquareSoft for sticking to as pure a translation as humanly possible.

Check back next month for the Review Crew's thoughts on what could be shaping up to be the absolute best RPG ever, Final Fantasy VII. ■



PUBLISHER	SCEA
DEVELOPER	SquareSoft
GENRE	RPG
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	80%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

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PLAYSTATION



Is Crash inside of the Deathstar? Now, he's just getting his Jetpack.



Look at that fancy reflection. It's just one of many cool effects.



Crash BANDICOOT 2

Crash Into The Cortex Vortex

He has come all the way from Australia to stop Cortex for a second time, so you can count on him spacing things up a bit. Crash Bandicoot is back and has a load of new tricks up his...uh...fur in Crash 2 for the PlayStation.

The evil Dr. Cortex is back to give Crash hell, but that's not what it seems like at first.

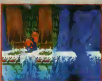
According to Cortex, he has seen the error in his ways and wants to help humanity. Sound fishy? It should, considering Cortex was the one who got a hold of Crash's girl in the first game and nearly botched things up for everyone in Crash's world.

So Cortex tells Crash that if

he collects these crystals scattered throughout the various levels, the Cortex Vortex (an invention of Cortex's) will supposedly stop the impending doom...yeah right.

Although it's a nice thought, it's obvious that Cortex hasn't changed, so what has? The game is still on a "track" of sorts in that the levels take place on long corridors, but this time there is more freedom of movement. Crash can jump up on different platforms and even fly in some cases.

On top of this, Crash can now use a whole array of vehicles—and animals. Besides the spider, Crash can jump on a Jet Ski with turbo power and skis around the water avoiding mines and whirlpools,



among other watery enemies. Not only can Crash take a ride on a mechanized piece of machinery, but he can also jump on a polar bear's back and cruise. There are other interactive devices to take control of in the game as well.

Crash can also do all sorts of cool moves. Some include belly flops, slides and power jumps, among many others. Because of the 30 fps and his hilarious antics, Crash looks good whatever moves he's doing. But it's not just the animation that does this for him or the other characters in the game.

The graphics look even better than before. Gone are the days of blocky characters thanks to the upgraded polygon count, and now



the game has colored light sourcing to make it look even better. Crash now gets a red glow when he's near a flame. Plus Naughty Dog got funky with other little graphic effects that make a world of difference. For instance, in the snow level Crash can skate around on ice. While he does, his reflection appears in the ice. Who said the PlayStation couldn't do reflection mapping?

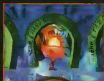
Fans of the first Crash should be pleased with the sequel coming out and new gamers not familiar with the Bandicoot may find themselves having a ball. ■

PUBLISHER	SCWA
DEVELOPER	Naughty Dog/US
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	40%
RELEASE DATE	November
ALSO ON	Nine

Gamer's EDGE

Warp Rooms

Unlike the first Crash, the sequel is broken up by Warp Rooms. In these Warp Rooms, Crash can choose what level he wants to go to next. When all of the levels in one Warp Room are completed, a new Warp Room opens up and more levels can be played through. The game works like this throughout, all the way up to the final Boss. It's a new way of getting around for Crash, one that's similar in style to the Mega Man games. Here's a quick look at a Warp Room:



Why does Crash wiggle his eyebrows before riding this bear?

PLAYSTATION



HERCULES

An Adventure In A Cartoon World

Hercules is an interesting action-adventure game that combines colorful Disney-quality animation with sophisticated 3-D graphics.

Hercules is based on the newly released Disney movie, and it follows it quite religiously. There are even actual cinematic clips taken from the movie and incorporated into the game. Although not contributing to gameplay, these contribute to the game's cartoon look which the programmers of Hercules sought to achieve. It is also sure to please fans of the Disney movie.

Of course, you can control the muscle-bound Hercules character. The game is mostly action oriented, but it does require that



Show your superhuman strength by carrying boulders above your head.

you use your brain and brawn to fight the mythical creatures and villainous enemies you'll find in your quest to live on Mt. Olympus as a god. These enemies include the Hydra, a beasty monster with an assortment of heads that regenerates if decapitated; the one-eyed Cyclops; and the ever-beautiful Medusa. Each of these villains pose different threats to you and will have to be toppled in order for Hercules to obtain his status as a god on Mt. Olympus.

Not only does the game provide great animation, but the different voices that come from your animated allies add to the ambience of the game. These voices include Danny DeVito as Phil, James Woods as Hades and "Bobcat" Goldthwait as Pegasus—just like the movie.

There are 10 different levels within the



Mount your winged horse and fly your way through perils to Mt. Olympus.

game, and each is taken from various scenes in the movie. Most of the levels are that of side-scrolling fare, but there are also 3-D sequences (such as one that is an incredibly long obstacle course) spaced throughout, giving the game variety. There are three different worlds within these levels. They consist of Earth, Mt. Olympus and the Underworld.

The graphics in Hercules are impressive, as it meshes 2-D side-scrolling gameplay with 3-D graphics and landscapes. For



Defeat Medusa and watch her turn into solid stone.



Decapitate the Hydra and watch the green blood ooze from the wounds.

instance, axes and other 3-D obstacles will swing back and forth, giving the game depth. One notable feature about Hercules is the way he can move in and out of several layers of background scenery, which enhances the overall depth and gives the game an extra element of exploration. Using this, many levels have multiple paths and secret areas that hold extra power-ups and goodies.

In stores now, Hercules is a game that will appeal to both fans of the movie and to gamers who love a good action game. ■

PUBLISHER	Virgin
DEVELOPER	Virgin
THEME	Action/Adventure
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	July
ALSO ON	None

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PLAYSTATION



Ogre

BATTLE

A Second Chance To Save The Empire



Target cards (picked up by liberating towns) cast helpful magical spells.

Pay attention to the time of day; some units fight better at night.

This summer, Atlus is releasing a game that is going to cause plenty of excitement in the gaming community. *Ogre Battle*, a Super NES strategy title that some gamers hold in high regard, is about to be rereleased on the Sony PlayStation.

The Super NES game is pretty hard to get your hands on. Erik America didn't make very many of them, and what little they did were picked up immediately. Currently, used cartridges are selling for upward of \$150, if you can find one. Atlus, realizing that supply failed to meet demand, is now making the classic available to many others, although the new game will also be released in limited quantities.

Don't expect this to be a sequel. The PlayStation *Ogre Battle* is almost an exact port of the original. The few

changes (see sidebar) do not affect the story or gameplay.

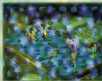
For those of you unfamiliar with the game, it takes place during a magical time of unrest and turmoil. You must lead a rebellion to free the empire of its evil and corrupt rule. To do so, you must take your band of adventurers across the countryside to liberate towns and temples, one at a time. Along the way, you will meet more mercenaries and recruit a bigger army to help your cause.

Each stage has one boss that you must defeat to advance. But before you do so, you should liberate towns by simply traveling to them. Each location you free may give you a magical target card, which you can use in battle offensively or defensively. Each city also brings in more income, which you need to hire more troops. You can also buy new equipment and magical items in certain cities. Then as you advance on to the Boss, you'll have to defeat the enemy troops he sends your way.

The strategy aspect comes in deciding who to send into battle, and to a lesser extent, where and when. Each military unit can be made up of up to five characters of various classes: knights, vikings, wizards, clerics, amazons, golems, witches, etc. You must make decisions on how each unit is arranged, how they attack, who makes them up, what type of terrain they should attack on, when they should attack (day or night) and so on. Once you are in

battle, you make very few actual decisions. The units will fight it out themselves, but you can intercede with a decision to cast magic from one of your target cards or to retreat shamelessly.

Ogre Battle is a very original strategy game that came from a time when strategy games were rare. It was a big hit a few years ago, but how well will it do today? Make sure to catch the review in this issue to find out. ■



Ogre Battle is chock-full of visually impressive, full-screen effects.

Behind the SCREENS Dare to Compare

You can't just rerelease a 16-Bit classic as a 32-Bit game without adding a few improvements. Quies/Arunk listened to the fans of the first *Ogre Battle* and made a few changes to the PlayStation version. The biggest complaint of the Super NES game was that you could only save a game after completing a chapter. Since some chapters can take a couple of hours to play, this became rather annoying for players who needed to eat, sleep, etc. Now you can save your game at any point, provided you have your memory card, of course. Other little changes include the redrawing of the magical spells, extended musical tracks and being able to set waypoints when traveling across the map.



PUBLISHER	Atlus
DEVELOPER	Quies/Arunk
TITLE	Strategy
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	New
ALSO ON	None

VIDEO GAMES: PLAYSTATION

Title	Year	Genre	Release Price	Title	Year	Genre	Release Price
ASD	11/97	Shooting	\$49	Blade	11/97	Action	\$49
Asin Combat 2	11/97	Shooting	\$49	Blade II	11/97	Action	\$49
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VIDEO GAMES: SATURN

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Asin Training 20	11/97	Shooting	\$49

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ASD	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Combat 2	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Aren Force	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Arena	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Apocalypse	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 2	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 3	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 4	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 5	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 6	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 7	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 8	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 9	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 10	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 11	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 12	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 13	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 14	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 15	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 16	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 17	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 18	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 19	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 20	11/97	Shooting	\$49

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

ASD	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Combat 2	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Aren Force	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Arena	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Apocalypse	11/97	Shooting	\$49
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Asin Training 11	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 12	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 13	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 14	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 15	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 16	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 17	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 18	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 19	11/97	Shooting	\$49
Asin Training 20	11/97	Shooting	\$49

MAGE THE GAMING'S BATTLEMAGE A devastating spellcaster you'll never see on the computer at GameStop. Kahlid has gone inside from good and beyond, making the destruction of all other spellcasters and the conquest of mind and soul.

Release Date: NOW PSX 50

STAR FORCE 64 Like command of a high-performance A-wing, Star Force battles you as you fly to save the Living Star System from the diabolical hands of the evil sorcerer, Andross.

Release Date: NOW N64 \$24

LETAL ENFORCES 1 & 2 puts gamers in the heat of the big city fighting crime or against the reigning, toughest gangsters the city has to offer. Two completely unique games on one CD!

Release Date: NOW PSX \$40

MARVEL SUPER HEROES: WAR OF THE GOD

PLAYSTATION

Dragon Ball GT's dynamic camera angles mean you'll see more intense action than in the average fighting game.

DRAGON BALL GT

Long Overdue: DB Comes To The U.S.

You probably have heard of it, even though the games are all in Japanese. You probably have seen it, almost every month you can see examples of it in the envelope art section of EGM. What is it? Dragon Ball. This international phenomenon started off as a Japanese manga and has evolved into over 450 TV show episodes (across three series), countless Dragon Ball toys and action figures, and now an 11th video game.

Despite their legendary cult status, Dragon Ball video games have always eluded the American audience, until now. Dragon Ball GT, soon to be completed in Japan, is going to be the first-ever game of the series to be officially released in the U.S. The gaming community asked and asked, and now they shall receive.

Dragon Ball GT (the game) is not really based on the Dragon Ball GT anime (which is the latest and third series running on

Japanese television). Think of the game as sort of a Dragon Ball Remix—it is an ambitious fighting game that throws most of the characters from the Dragon Ball GT universe in with some folks from the Dragon Ball Z universe (which was the previous series in Japan and is currently showing on syndicated television here in the States). The game is simply a tournament of the best fighters of both Dragon Ball worlds and has no direct connection to the GT anime's story line. A mix of 10 Dragon Ball Z and GT fighters (and eight hidden ones) make up the cast of the game.

The gameplay can be considered a cross between a typical 2-D fighter like Street Fighter and Psychic Force. Acclaim's 3-D fighting game. Although the Dragon Ball GT combatants are polygon rendered, all of the battles take place on a two-dimensional plane. Each fighter has a Punch, Kick, Block and Basso button. Performing Street Fighter, or Mortal Kombat-style moves will execute one of several attacks and/or combos

But a few things separate D8GT from the masses. First, each character can fly almost anywhere he/she wants on the map. This leads to some interesting fighting strategies when your opponent can move anywhere around you. Second, all DB fighters have a super move that can be blocked or countered. If someone attempts to counter a super with another super, then the two powers will lock up, and an ensuing tug-of-war battle (which you win by tapping the Beam button as fast as

possible) will determine whose super gets through, and of course, who gets hurt.

This new fighting style is like nothing you've seen before. It will be interesting to see how the American audience accepts Dragon Ball GT. Players in love with Street Fighter or Tekken might hold it in disdain, but the Dragon Ball fans will welcome it. Dragon Ball GT is almost a guaranteed winner; sales-wise. Hopefully, this will mean more Dragon Ball games in the future for us. ■

Behind the SCREENS

The Dragon Ball anime tells the story of our young hero, Goku, and went for over 100 episodes in Japan. The few that were shown in the United States during 1995 really didn't make an impression rabidly-wise. Dragon Ball Z, however, is a new story, both figuratively and literally. This series tells the tales of an adult Goku. Over 300 episodes aired in Japan, and they are now being broadcast in the U.S. by Seisan Entertainment of Power Rangers fame. If you haven't heard of Dragon Ball Z before, you will soon, as this weekly cartoon series is seriously taking off. In fact Dragon Ball Z has higher sweeps ratings than Friends or X-Files in certain parts of the country, despite its

non-primetime slot. Currently, the series has moved on to Dragon Ball GT in Japan. Cindy Fukunaga, half owner of the broad licensing rights to Dragon Ball Z, told us that in all likelihood, Dragon Ball GT will eventually be shown here in the U.S. (but it won't be for a while, since they have plenty Dragon Ball Z episodes to show yet).



Tug-of-war matches put an interesting twist on the fighter genre.

PUBLISHER	Bandai
DEVELOPER	Bandai
THEME	Fighting
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	70%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None



A scene from Dragon Ball Z.

PLAYSTATION

NEXT WAVE



The object of *Tecmo Stackers* is to create huge chains that force hordes of blocks onto your opponent's playfield.

Tecmo STACKERS

It's All In The Chains...

In the last year or so, the popularity of Tetris-style puzzle games has increased tenfold (thanks largely in part to the Super NES masterpiece, *Tetris Attack*). Tecmo Stackers is the latest addition to the ever-growing puzzle game genre, and despite being somewhat similar to a majority of the big-name puzzle games out there, Stackers offers enough of its own unique flavor to warrant a look from even the most jaded puzzle fans.

Stackers is, as the game's subtitle explains, "A Game of Chain Reactions." Similar in basic play mechanics to Puyo-Puyo

(Kirby's *Avananche* or Dr. Robotnik's *Mean Bean Machine* in the U.S.) or even *Boku Baku*, the object of the game is to eliminate your opponent by building up stacks of colored blocks and then igniting fierce chain reactions that inevitably unload loads of useless transparent pieces on your opponent's stack (which essentially get in the way of them performing their own chains).

Sounds just like the aforementioned games, right? Well the difference, albeit a minor one, is that in Stackers, your "blocks" are actually little faces that, when hit by other blocks, stretch out arms to the left and right that will attach to other blocks of the same



The **Time Trial Mode** pits your chaining ability against the clock.

color and eliminate them (as long as there are four or more blocks of the same color touching). So in essence, you might drop a block that would've only eliminated one or two sets of blocks normally, but instead started a huge chain reaction because the arms stretched out to otherwise unresizable blocks and attached to them (thus eliminating them). In addition, there is a roulette meter at the top of each playfield, and when you set off a chain, the "wheel" starts spinning, where you stop it will determine where your safe spot is the next time a batch of blocks gets dumped on you. It may sound confusing, but in actuality it makes for a surprisingly fun game with a good amount of strategy thrown into the action.

Currently, the version we're previewing has three playable modes (Arcade, Time Trial and Chain Reaction), but the final is expected to have five modes of play in total. The Arcade Mode is the standard one, or two-player game, while the Time Trial Mode is a race to



The **Chain Reaction Mode** features a super-large playfield four screens high!

create as many chains as possible in the shortest amount of time. The Chain Reaction Mode offers a cool twist: the playfield is actually three or four screens high (you can scroll up and down or zoom out to view it), and the object is to build as large a chain reaction as humanly possible (which isn't TOO difficult, considering the vast amount of space you have, but still fun nonetheless).

Fans of traditional falling block puzzle games looking for old-school action with some cool new twists would be wise to check out Tecmo Stackers, due for release later this year. ■

Gamer's EDGE

The key to success in Tecmo Stackers lies in effectively setting up blocks to unleash huge chain reactions on your opponent. After a while, setting up will become second-hand, but it's important to remember that your opponent will be doing just the same. A useful tip to remember is to keep an eye on your opponent's progress; sometimes it may be wiser to sacrifice setting up a huge chain in exchange for letting loose a smaller one simply to drop some blocks on your

opponent's playfield (and ultimately on his or her plans).

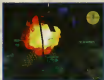
It's nice to build up tremendous chains (if you're skilled enough to do so), but it's more important to keep your opponent from unleashing the big ones on you first.



Chain React-ing

PUBLISHED	Tecmo
DEVELOPER	Tecmo
THREE	Puzzle
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

PLAYSTATION



G POLICE

Stop And We'll Shoot...

No, G Police from Pygnosis isn't about a band of gangster police officers. The game is about a futuristic helicopter police force that makes sure things are safe on the ground and in the air.

The mission-based action title (35 missions total) takes the best parts of Black Dawn and some of the neo-futuristic elements of Syndicate and throws in a lot of originality for a concoction that gamers should think is delicious. G Police is the big one for Pygnosis—the one they're sinking all of their bean into.

G Police takes place on Callisto, one of Jupiter's moons where recent gang warfare has been escalating. Although it is unknown in the first missions, the recent crime has a lot to do with mega corporations on the moon colony.

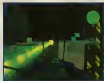
Some missions take players to robberies that turn ugly when the criminals start firing on you,

but it's nothing a couple of rockets can't take care of. The mission then unfolds into a larger one with air enemies and a lot more firepower.

While traveling from city to city in the massive colony (50 cities altogether), players will have to use their craft so outmaneuver and then take the enemy down as quick as possible (or at least quick as the objective requires). Players can switch to different views so they can get the best bead on whatever they have to investigate or destroy. In some cases, players will have to switch to an overhead view for a bombing mission on corporation buildings, or to a behind-the-helicopter view for you won't ram into the side of a bridge. Some views are just for show.

G Police features a large array of weapons to choose from, including different types of missiles and bombs, lasers and a cannon, among others. Players can also choose to have air support from a wingman. This is especially useful when attacking large enemies or huge targets (like enemy buildings, etc.) Another weapon that proves to be necessary in later missions is the EPP. The EPP creates an electromagnetic shield around the enemy so his/her vehicle stops operating in some missions, this is required so the ground squad can come in and arrest him/her (instead of you destroying him/her like normal).

The graphics effects on the weapons are incredible-looking,



The weapon lighting effects are incredible—as usual for Pygnosis.



Try not to blow up pedestrians in the process of stopping the enemy.

but then again what else is expected from Pygnosis, the company that defined the style of cool weapon and explosion effects on the PlayStation.

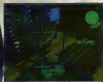
The graphics in the game (as far as the polygons go) are very detailed, with little pop-up due to the inventive use of fogging. All the levels at the beta version of G Police took place inside a dome city. The city has vehicles on the streets and plenty of structures to zig and zag around. All seemed normal until the little bip on the radar turned out to be a bad guy. All of this happens at 30 frames per second. ■

PUBLISHER	Pygnosis
DEVELOPER	Pygnosis
THEME	Action/Strategy
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	50%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

Behind The SCREENS

Why this one?

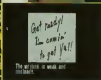
EGM had a word with Mark Day, product marketing manager for Pygnosis about G Police and why they felt it's the one to sink all their marketing and development money into. "It's complexed but it's not like some secret process. It varies from game to game according to their potential. Right now, G Police and Colony Wars are neck and neck as far as the money we're putting into them goes. We ask ourselves if this one could do the business, plus we look to see if it'd do well on the PC...we're putting ads on TV for G Police and all, but it's a good game and that's what it comes down to in the end."



Simply follow crafts in some missions instead of blowing them up.



Rick-A master was once born here that terrorized the



The warning is weak and unclear.



Helen We asked her for an interview, but she refused.



It's never a nice thing to find an old friend with a spear in his hand.

Clock Tower

Now That's What I Call One Mean Barber

When people go to the local barber, they think nothing of getting their hair cut with a pair of sharp scissors welded by some old guy. Now what if the scissors were about 3-foot long and being used by a mutated psycho? Needless to say, the scenario changes.

Haircuts aside, Clock Tower for the PlayStation is a horror-filled adventure that puts players in control of one of several characters trying his/her best to solve a gruesome murder case while trying to stay alive.

The story starts in a remote

town in Norway. As breathtaking as the countryside may be, the crime situation is more aptly called life-taking. Stone's surface of a deadly "monster" who kills with large scissors. But that was long ago. How can the Scissorman, the game's hideous bad guy, still be around now?

Although the game's surreal intro doesn't seem to have anything to do with the game, it may give gamers a hint that there's something mystical behind the evil Scissorman. After that the only thing that's unclear is why Scissorman likes to kill so much.

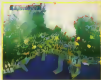
Gamers can use the mouse or joystick to control the Professor as he walks around and talks to the local newspaper about the Scissorman killing. This segment seems like a good way to learn how to control the characters in the game. After the uneventful prologue, the first scenario starts and the killing begins. Players control Helen in Scenario One as she runs for her life trying to



Hide in, under or behind things so you won't get scissors in your gut.

escape from the university staff building where Scissorman has already killed at least three people (two of which were her friends). The sound of scissors clanking together never sounded so evil, and Scissorman jumping out of the darkness at different points in the game will jump start your heart more than once.

There are many other scenarios that don't necessarily go in any order. For instance, in one situation Helen has the choice of asking a police detective (who goes by the name of Gotta) if he'd wait a man to ask him some questions if she asks him, players then control Gotta at the man's house, and



Travel to various locations to gain info on the deadly Scissorman.

if she doesn't ask, players control Helen at the library. Either way, Scissorman does show up, causing major blood-spillage.

In between the scenarios, players can go around town to different locations gaining more information from friends and sources.

ASCII claims that their new title promises to have the bloodiest murder scenes in any video game to date—that means more than Resident Evil! Players will witness entrails spilled onto bathroom floors, senseless decapitations (like Mr. Sullivan), torn-out throats and even vomiting! After all, you'd vomit too if you saw all that murder taking place. ■



For I am an instructor at the Grania University.



Sullivan...but I will look into it so you might stay by

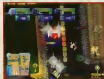
There are times when you must run and hide or you'll be skewered.

Mr. Sullivan is a library guy who's just trying to get "ahead" in life.

PUBLISHER:	ASCII
DEVELOPER:	Human
THEME:	Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
% COMPLETE:	10%
RELEASE DATE:	August
ALSO ON:	None



PLAYSTATION



Some areas can only be accessed by beerver. And hey—it boots walkin'!

Syndicate Wars

The Wars Finally Begin

Syndicate Wars was one of the first titles announced for the PlayStation, yet we've seen nothing but screen shots of it for the past two years. Now that the game's nearly finished, it looks worth the wait—at least if you like Syndicate, because this sequel does out more of the same.

Like the original, Syndicate Wars puts you in control of four cybernetic, nearly indestructible super agents, whom you unleash to perform the dirtiest kinds of dirty work: murder, terrorism, industrial espionage, mass destruction. Except now you can pick from two organizations at the game's outset. If you choose EuroCorp, then things go a bit easier. For the past 50 years—ever since it emerged victorious from the first Syndicate conflict—EuroCorp has maintained an iron grip on humanity, mainly due to the mind-control chips implanted in nearly every citizen's noggin. Challenging EuroCorp is the



Church of the New Epoch, a mysterious organization of high-tech adepts whose gangs of zealots are just as powerful as EuroCorp's agents. Both sides have their own missions and a few unique weapons.

Most missions busy you with several objectives, including assassination of troublesome enemies, persuading scientists or other valuable folks to join your side; protecting key officials, vehicles or buildings; and stealing items from heavily guarded areas. Successful missions fill your bank account with credits, letting you



buy new weapons or body-part upgrades for your agent team. You start the game with a little cash and wimpy Uzis, but soon you'll acquire explosives, railzire and other nasty, exotic arms that your R&D department will invent.

Of course, these gameplay elements were in the original, too. So what's new? Syndicate Wars' graphics have been supercharged and are even better than the PC version's visuals. The Blade Runner-esque cities are fully polygonal now, and can be rotated around the team, with buildings becoming transparent when

You may be stuck with controlling only four cyber-supermen, but—thanks to your trusty Persuadertron—you can recruit an army of ad-hoc soldiers during each mission. When activated, the Persuadertron (killed the Indominator if you play as the Church of the New Epoch) will force most nearby citizens to fall in step with your team. They'll even fight alongside you if they find any weapons lying around. But you'll probably find the followers most useful as human shields whom you can use for cover during the heat of battle (they, who said war was pretty?).

Collect enough stragglers, and you'll be able to persuade police officers or even enemy agents to tag along. Lure these agents to the evacuation zone and they'll be yours to command in later missions.



they block your view. And the PlayStation's panache with lighting effects means explosions look particularly good.

The control interface is a bit bulky, forcing you to go through several button combinations to pick individual agents or ready their weapons. The mouse makes things a bit easier, but you'll have the best luck if you play Syndicate Wars with a few friends. With one human player controlling each of the four agents, your team will be unstoppable. ■



Unwind by watching the hovering billboards, which flash with FMV.



When things aren't going your way, self-destruct and call it a day.



Buildings become transparent, giving bad guys nowhere to hide.

PUBLISHER:	EA
DEVELOPER:	Bullfrog
THEME:	Strategy
PLAYERS:	1-4
% COMPLETE:	100%
RELEASE DATE:	None
ALSO ON:	None



NEXT WAVE



Watch the people flee for safety to avoid being bumper-bait.

FELONY 11-79

One Part Racing, One Part Demolition

Imagine driving your new, cherry-red BMW through a police road-block without a hint of concern for your personal safety, the safety of the pedestrians, or the preservation of your classic ride. This is what Felony 11-79 is all about. As you haul ass down the winding city streets at up to 250 mph, you are not only unaware of every traffic violation known to man, but you are also oblivious to the police and your fellow drivers. There has

just been a \$18 billion heist, and you are the driver trying to weave your way through the busy downtown streets in the getaway car Felony 11-79, aka Runabout Glimex in Japan (in fact, Felony 11-79 might not be the final release title, but that was the consensus at press time) is not just another racing game, but total destruction on wheels. The object of the game is to not only drive your car through the different levels of the game, but to try to destroy as much as you possibly

can without crashing your car first. An obvious example of this is on Level 3; you must drive your car through a mall and demolish whatever crosses your path. Don't worry about the shoppers, they'll be more mortified at the site of you diving like a bat out of hell and scurrying out of the way, barely missing your front bumper.

Sound easy? The catch is you have to steal special objects along the way, like when you run into a limousine you can get a precious artifact in the process. But you have to do this in the allotted amount of time given or you'll have to start over again. This makes the game very challenging, as there isn't much time to spare when you add all of these elements together. Rush hour traffic jams, toll booths, police road-blocks, 10 car pile-ups, fiery explosives, pedestrians, fruit stands, trailers and various buildings all make criminal life a living hell. You have to decide what things to tear through and what



Plow through shopping malls and rack up demolition dollars.

obstacles to avoid so as not to crash your car.

One exciting attribute to Felony 11-79 is the wide variety of routes you can take to get to your destination. Within these routes are ancient subways, bridges and roads which act as shortcuts. To make life easier for your escape, you'll get a map showing your location on such levels.

Hold on to your seat because you'll be treated to efficient polygonal graphics (which zip by at boosted speeds), realistic light-sourcing and fully rendered 3-D vehicles, which all add to the realism and overall fun factor of Felony 11-79.

Gamer's EDGE

Felony 11-79 has a vast assortment of cars you can choose from, starting with four cars on the first level, building up to the final 22 vehicles as the game nears its end. But choose your car wisely; it can make the difference between successfully completing each level, or blowing up in a blaze and having to start at the beginning of the level.

The faster cars such as the Lamborghini boost down the straightaways at speeds beyond belief but are hell to steer around tight corners. The slower cars like the VW Bug won't have that afterburner speed but will corner like they're on rails.

Will you take the no-frills dog-speed approach or opt for the Mi Di Reliable laid-back approach? Both will take you toward the finish line if your driving skills are on track. A little advice: Don't stick with just one car. Each car can make or break it for you depending on the layout of the level you are on. Which car will you choose?



Run the limousine and acquire another priceless artifact.

PUBLISHER:	ASCN
DEVELOPER:	Climax
THEME:	Rock
PLAYERS:	1
% COMPLETE:	100%
RELEASE DATE:	August
ALSO ON:	None

Rent-A-Wreck

SPORTS

NFL GAMEDAY '98

Sony's incredible 3-D football game gains the graphical edge

Ever since it debuted, NFL GameDay has been the PlayStation's premier football franchise. Showing no signs of letting up, Sony's '98 edition of the popular pegskin game is on track to repeat the successes reaped by the previous two editions.

The primary (and most obvious) change in this year's NFL GameDay is undoubtedly its all-new 3-D look. In fact, the 3-D graphics gracing GameDay are revolutionary—for a football game couldn't be accomplished at a reasonable frame rate (due to the amount of players and high-speed action). Needless to say, Sony's talented GameDay programming team proved the naysayers wrong. Though the players are a little rough and blocky in the version we played (and they won't be improved a whole lot more), the realistic, motion-captured player animation more than makes up for it.

For example, tacklers use their arms to wrap up ball carriers, players tight-rope the sidelines (that one is a treat to see!) and line-backers crouch and sway while surveying the line. Look for plenty of extra taunting moves during gameplay and after a touchdown.



There is even a Deion Sanders-esque high-step move that can be used to evade defenders and to rub an easy touchdown in your opponent's face (high-step across the goal line, baby).

The players are only part of the immersive 3-D environment, however. Coaches, sideline crews and cameramen will also be visible within the football stadiums (superfluous things rarely seen in football video games). With all of this attention to detail, it's crystal clear that GameDay '98's 3-D engine has enabled this game to be the most realistic-looking PlayStation football game ever (we're still waiting to see how Acclaim's QB Club '98 on the N64 shapes up).

Even with the stunning 3-D makeover, GameDay '98 will play similar to its predecessor. A variety of new jukes have been put in (made possible by the polygonal graphics), but the same tried-and-true gameplay is still in place. The gameplay is, however, being tweaked to play more realistically. A good example is the quarterback position. It will take longer to throw (no more firing passes off easily with three defenders in front of you), and if he's hit while in the throwing motion, the result could be a bad throw or a fumble. The overall artificial intelligence is also being improved, especially on the defensive end. The goal is to cut down on "money plays" by having defenders cover their territory as



GameDay '98 has the most realistic tackling ever seen in a football game (left).



efficiently as they should (unless they have a low intelligence rating).

As you can see, NFL GameDay '98 is an impressive game to see. If its gameplay lives up to its seductive 3-D looks, there is no doubt Sony's gridiron title will set a new standard in football video games.



Here, the QB looks left and right while calling the play. Below you can see the receiver in motion.



The 3-D graphics in GameDay '98 allow for a variety of practical camera angles to be used during gameplay.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	September
	THREE
	Football
PUBLISHER	SEGA
SCENA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% HOME
1-8	70%

FORMULA 1: CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION

With a fresh set of options and features, Psygnosis prepares to launch a 900 HP Formula 1 rocket

Psygnosis' Formula 1 established itself as a rock-solid racing game catering to racing fan fans with its no-frills, realistic look and tight, unforgiving gameplay. What has Psygnosis done to top itself for its sequel Formula 1: Championship Edition? For starters, they kept the same game engine and overall look (which is a very good thing). Second, they answered the needs of players by adding important elements the first edition sorely lacked.

The list of changes between the original F-1 and the one is long. Most important is the addition of a two-player Split-screen Racing

Mode (it's practically a sin not to have this in a racing game). F-1's graphics have been upgraded with more realistic light-sourcing effects and a couple more in-game cameras have been added (behind the front wheels and in the driver's seat itself).

In an attempt to spice up the game's fun, power-sliding is now possible in Arcade Mode. Throwing out the back end of an F-1 car is not a normal driving tactic, but makes for interesting racing. Also along those lines, chaotic collisions complete with fire and smoke effects are a much welcomed addition. While the wrecks aren't massive, flip-overs are



Formula 1: Championship Edition's 3-D engine is very similar to last year's, which is fine, since it worked.

convincing enough to make you want to avoid hitting other cars.

F-1:CE is shaping up to be an in-depth Formula 1 racing simulation with an arcade touch to cover all the bases. Let's hope they keep it that way.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	September
	THREE
PUBLISHER	Racing
	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DRUG
1 or 2	50%

HARDCORE 4X4 2

Extreme 4X4 racing is given new life by ASC's latest off-road effort

When ASC released Hardcore 4x4 last year, it showed the potential of a four-wheel independent suspension, and how it can be used in a game to successfully emulate the off-road driving experience. This year they hope to return that same raw, off-road feel while adding some flat-out speed and racing thrills to the mix.

Beefing up the vehicle lineup with seven trucks (all Chevys), each will be special in its own way. Players will have the chance to pump up their vehicles with nitro, engine, tire and

suspension upgrades as they win more races. A variety of tracks (right in all) including New Orleans swamplands, the Grand Canyon and even an indoor stadium track will all be open for play in response to players who thought wider courses would be nicer to race on. Hardcore 2 will have more spacious tracks as well as more diverse terrain (sporting such obstacles as sand dunes, swamps and the occasional broken-down truck). Also in response to the players' cries, a Two-player Mode has been added.

Look for the usual selection of weather options, rain, snow and night driving as well. Bad weather conditions are likely to cause extreme driving conditions, resulting in

wrecks galore. Damaged trucks will run slower the more they are beaten up, thus adding serious variables for drivers to consider when battling for the win.

With so many driving games debuting in the upcoming months, TNN's Hardcore 4x4 2 will find itself hip-deep in racing-arms competition. With any luck, it could be rooted firmly in the lead of the pack when released this fall.



Hardcore 4x4 2 has a much faster 3-D engine than the original.

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
	THREE
PUBLISHER	Racing
	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% DRUG
1 or 2	40%

**CLONING SHEEP
DON'T MEAN JACK.**





WE CLONED THE DOMINATOR.

NHL POWERPLAY™ 98

While pretty close to a gosh-darn miracle, Dolly — that cloned sheep — really doesn't understand the nuance of the butterfly style. In fact, she's a lot like those other hockey games — the ones where all the little computer guys play the same. Claude Lemieux doesn't check like Brindamour in real life, and he doesn't in NHL Powerplay '98 either. Our Patrick Roy doesn't make glove saves like the Dominator, and you'll have a tough time beating our Beezer through the five hole. We use the actual styles and abilities of guys like Fedorov, Shenahan, Leetch and every other player in the NHL to deliver the most realistic hockey game ever created. It's real skating, real physics and real action — and it's a helluva lot cooler than cloning sheep. www.vfi.com



CART WORLD SERIES

Fast, realistic and 3-D, Sony's racer could throttle past the competition

Is there no sport that Sony won't seek to re-create? Evidently not, as they are taking on racing with *CART World Series*, the latest game in a long list of impressive-looking Sony sports titles.

CART (Championship Auto Racing Teams—also known as *Indy Car racing*) is an ambitious title that painstakingly attempts to emulate every facet of the gasoline-burning sport. Grease monkeys will be pleased to know that every important facet of the racing vehicle can be modified. Put the car in the garage, slip on the fancy mechanics overalls and customize things such as its fuel capacity, weight distribution, aerodynamics and gear ratios. All of these things will factor into the race, as the game's engine takes into account realistic turning,

rolling, push and oversteer.

Once on the race track, the complexity continues. Every piece of the vehicle can be damaged as a result of collisions, or good of wear-and-tear during a race. Pulling into a pit stop will replenish your fuel and change your tires, but more serious things will render your vehicle a stationary object. If all of these complexities scare you, three different difficulty levels will ease the anxiety in addition to a very forgiving Arcade Mode.

Depth of play won't be a problem as *CART* is a well-rounded racing game that includes several play modes (including a Season Mode) that



Obviously, the 3-D graphics are quite impressive. That's why we didn't mention them in the preview.

feature statistical tracking and fully licensed driving teams (28, such as Bobby Rahal, etc.)

With great depth, solid 3-D graphics and a load of licenses, it seems that Sony's magic touch at making good sports games is as powerful as ever in this realistic racing title.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	November
	THEME
	Racing
PUBLISHER	SIZE
BCEA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% BONUS
1 or 2	N/A

COOL BOARDERS 2

Sony's fast and frigid snowboarding game is getting a whole lot cooler

Already being a 3-D polygonal game (for the most part), *Cool Boarders* has not experienced the extreme face-lift the other Sony sports games have. Instead, most of the improvements went into the variety of stunts, increased number of courses and the competitive element of the game.

Increasing the number of courses from five to 16 will all but ensure plenty of variety for the long haul and is probably the biggest improvement in the game. Along with the increase in tracks, players will be able to perform all the

old tricks and an addition of 40 new maneuvers including Front Side 540s, Back Side Alley Dops and 720 Nosebones, to name a few. To hone your trick boarding abilities, all new half-pipe and downhill slalom courses have been added.

What would any good snowboarding game be if it didn't have a large selection of rad snowboarder dudes to choose from? Well...not much—*Cool Boarders* is no exception. Ten characters are available and ready for competition each with his or her own special abilities and talents. In addition to the characters, a ton of new boards are in stock, along with a customization option to create the perfect



Unlike the first *Cool Boarders*, there is a large amount of stunts and catching air. Woo-hoo!

slope-skim" device (board).

All the new features and options lock great, but the real fun will probably be had in Two-player Mode. Fortunately, it looks very strong this year due to improved collision detection and game physics.

With all of these new features, *Cool Boarders 2* looks to be a more involving and intense game. Look for a review in the coming months.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	November
	THEME
	Snowboarding
PUBLISHER	SIZE
BCEA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% BONUS
1 or 2	N/A

Current Favorites:

Kraig Kujawa - NFL GameDay '98 • MLB '98

Dean Hager - NFL GameDay '98 • MLB '98

Sporting Game Reviews

MLB '98 • PLAYSTATION • SCEA

Kraig Kujawa

I've been complaining for a while that there isn't a great PlayStation baseball game, but after years of waiting, MLB '98 finally delivers. Sony's new baseball game is fast-paced, straightforward and (best of all) free! It plays well in both its Arcade and Simulation Modes. The 3-D graphics are excellent: Baseball players animate gracefully, the stadiums are authentic and the screen scrolls around the field smoothly. There's also plenty of features and options to give MLB '98 depth. Simply put, baseball fans shouldn't be without this title.



To put it in layman's terms: It's polygonal, it's fast and it rules! Sony has successfully combined a FULL 3-D game engine with real-time rendering and polygonal players to create a baseball gem. Real motion, fast frame rate and all the Major League licenses out there make this one great. In addition, the AI is as finely tuned as I have seen in a baseball title. Game time is fast, clocking in at about 20 minutes for an average contest. If the rest of Sony's new sports games are this good, we could have a dynasty on our hands.

Dean Hager

MANX TT: SUPER BIKE • SATURN • SEGA

Kraig Kujawa

Good racing game, but there's not enough of it. Fans of Sega's Manx TT arcade game will be happy to see this title, and that's about it. This game is a great conversion of the arcade racer that only has two different tracks! Sega helpfully added a little more depth to the home version by including mirror tracks, the two tracks reversed! A Time Trial and a few other features, but it simply isn't enough to outshine other incredibly deep racing games. Manx TT is the perfect racing game to rent; I only recommend buying it if you loved the arcade.



With such a shortage of motorcycle racing sims on the market, any release is welcome—but not this! Actually it *is* nice. Manx TT is fun, not to mention fast, graphically solid and possibly the last good racing sim to come out for the Saturn (pure speculation of course). Similar both in frame rate and look to Sega Rally, you have your choice of two tracks (or, if you want Mirror Mode) which, surprisingly, will keep you busy for a while. The game is good on its own, but to really lap it, use the analog controller.

Dean Hager

F-1 POLE POSITION • NINTENDO 64 • UBI SOFT

Kraig Kujawa

This is the first title that tries to simulate realistic racing on the N64, and it fails short of the mark. Before competing in the F-1 World Championship, you can tweak every part of your car, such as the brakes, suspension and tires. During the race you must also make pit stops. Unfortunately, these realistic elements are the only good parts of the game. The 3-D graphics are mediocre (lots of polygonal pop-up), the sound is poor and game control could be better. For racing simulation fans, F-1 might be worthwhile, but otherwise, don't bother.



Back in my preview of this game I mentioned how great a vehicle the N64 is for racing sims like F-1 Pole Position. That statement still stands. And while I still think the best N64 racing sims are yet to come, F-1 is the best yet. Forget about pretty scenery or a gigantic selection of cars, F-1 keeps it simple by concentrating strictly on smooth gameplay and a lot of intense racing challenge. Not to be misinterpreted, there is a good selection of cars and drivers (22 in all) but the primary focus is on racing gameplay (as it should be).

Dean Hager

WORLD SERIES BASEBALL '98 • SATURN • SEGA

Kraig Kujawa

World Series Baseball was the best 32-bit baseball game for the last few years, but all things change (courtesy of a game at the top of this page). This year's version sports a new 3-D look in addition to more pitching and hitting depth. The 3-D graphics are fast and fluent, but they have both flaws: Although there are quite some player animations and graphics are absolutely flawless (some bats look like a ZX4). The game, though it plays well, is downright awful when it comes to features. WSB '98 is still a very good game—it's just no longer the best.



While I'll admit I liked playing Sony's MLB '98 better than World Series Baseball, you can't really compare the two due to the differences in the PlayStation and the Saturn. WSB is definitely a good game with competent 3-D polygonal characters and fast, no-sound-better-than-my-mother's-great-physicist-animations. Still, some of the slowest I've seen out of track, mainly the out-of-proportion-looking players and bats. It all works well, but WSB looks a little funny. I'd say for sure: It's the best baseball game for the Saturn.

Dean Hager

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Don't forget, *EGM* reserves the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes.

LUNAR ON PS?

Dear *EGM*,

Is there any chance that Working Designs is ever going to come out with Lunar for the PlayStation? The Lunar series was definitely the best RPG that was ever on the Sega systems.

Nes204b@prodigy.com

Earlier this year, we probably would've told you, "No way." But with the recent goings-on between Sega and Working Designs, things are now different (see our E! Wrap-Up article this issue). As of this writing, Lunar: Silver Star Story will be Working Designs' last game for the Saturn. It's very unlikely that it will come out on other consoles, but we can't rule out that possibility. The Lunar 2 remake and Lunar 3 (which is in the planning stages now) are candidates for the PlayStation or even Sega's DreamCast (but the two Lunar games are definitely NOT coming out on the U.S. Saturn).



Working Designs will not be bringing out the remake in America. Let Our U.S. Letters

INSIDE SUSHI-X'S MIND

Dear *EGM*,

What is Sushi-X's L.O.? It must be pretty low for him to enjoy playing fighting games all the time.

Shane Swafford
Simpsonville, SC

Sushi-X's L.O. is still up for debate. Sushi might tell us what it is, but frankly, we feel that whatever number he'd give us, it would be way too high.

THREE JULY COVERS

Dear *EGM*,

I have a subscription to your magazine, and when I got issue #10, I saw a Fighting Force character on the cover. Then I went to a bookstore and saw that same issue with an Apocalypse cover. Do I have a special \$1 million issue?

Jellowho@uol.com

Believe us, if we had \$1 million we'd keep it all for our...or, we'd donate it to charity. We actually had three covers in July. Fighting Force went to our subscribers, Apocalypse went to foreign newsstands and to U.S. direct markets (e.g. book stores, video game specialty shops, etc.), and Gen 2 could be seen on U.S. domestic newsstands (e.g. supermarkets, airports, etc.). We felt that all three titles deserved some attention. Since we couldn't decide on one, we decided to give covers to all three games that month (we also wanted to give our art department three times more work than usual—we find doing so once in a while keeps them on their toes).

THE SFIII DEBATE

Dear *EGM*,

In response to whether I think Street Fighter III is a good game, I must say that this is a shameless excuse for a third installment. It has absolutely no originality whatsoever. The game plays just the same as every other fighting game from Capcom. Everyone was waiting for an actual new game from them and what? What did they give? Nothing! What a surprise! I never would have thought that Capcom would throw something entirely unoriginal at us.

boanab@fgl.net

Dear *EGM*,

I think that SFIII has some good points but also some bad points. First, the graphics are great; the animation is flawless. The control was very responsive, and the sound was good too. The best? Well, Street Fighter III's characters are lame, and the moves aren't all that exciting (they don't take much skill to do either). All in all, SFIII is very unoriginal; it's basically a graphical upgrade over the other Street Fighters but not much more than that.

Jason Bellows
Jrmon65@juno.com

When we asked (Interface, July issue) what you, our readers, thought of Street Fighter III, the overwhelming response was that the game was disappointingly unoriginal. Many here at the *EGM* offices agree.

TOP 5 THINGS

THE *EGM* STAFF WAS OVERHEARD SAYING AT E:

5 "Waaah! I want a gold N64 controller!"

4 "Can you wake me up in an hour?"

3 "Ooooo...did you catch that Metal Gear Solid Game?"

2 "Where the hell is Working Designs?"

1 "What did you think of Mario 64 2...er, Banjo-Kazooie?"

Letter of the MONTH

IT'S OUR MONEY, IT'S OUR CHOICE

Dear EGM,

I'm writing in response to the letter written by Steven Ford in issue #98. In his letter, Mr. Ford criticizes Sony and Square for what he considers unacceptable game elements in Final Fantasy VII. An amazing thing about the United States is that everyone can voice an opinion, no matter how ignorant it may be. This same country of ours allows us to make choices about our lives, especially as to where we spend our money. If Mr. Ford finds mature aspects of FFVII to be offensive, then he has the choice not to buy that game; this is his right. On the other hand, if I, or any other gamer, am not offended by the more adult aspects of the game, then I have an equally valid right to purchase and enjoy FFVII. I will agree with Mr. Ford that some games aren't meant for everyone. Games like Resident Evil or Tecmo's Deception weren't intended for 5-year-olds, though. These games were intended for responsible gamers, mature enough to handle the content. I am actually looking forward to Resident Evil: Director's Cut. Does this mean I lack moral integrity? According to Mr. Ford, it does. He claims that mature subject matter doesn't even belong in games. I say let the consumer be his or her own personal censor. Mr. Ford should realize that his personal definition of moral integrity may not reflect the rest of

the gaming world's. That is why we have the ESRB, to clearly label games according to their content. That way, people like Mr. Ford don't accidentally buy "evil games." Should he choose not to buy FFVII, then that's wonderful; just don't demand that Sony force-feed me a watered-down, censored version. We are all given choices, all I ask is that Mr. Ford allow me to make my own.

James Prescott
jdp0740@gamer.com.hawaii.edu

Well spoken. The simple fact of the matter is, some games have mature themes intended for mature audiences. If people don't like these themes, then they shouldn't support the game with their dollars. But let the mature consumers decide what to do with their own money.



Congratulations!
You win an
INTERACT
Control Pad for
the Saturn.
PlayStation or
Nintendo 64
links checked!

Dear EGM,
...you guys are covering the PlayStation way too much.
I wish you guys had more information on the PlayStation.
Your reviews of Sega Saturn games are the most pathetic, biased reviews I've ever seen. Nothing phases you if it's for the Saturn. Their games always get low scores.
Eduardo Moya
MA1171130@webtv.net

A NO-WIN SITUATION

Dear EGM,

...you guys are covering the PlayStation way too much.

Cindy Dwyer
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

...I wish you guys had more information on the PlayStation.

Raymond Irvin
Benton Harbor, MI

Your reviews of Sega Saturn games are the most pathetic, biased reviews I've ever seen. Nothing phases you if it's for the Saturn. Their games always get low scores.

Eduardo Moya
MA1171130@webtv.net

How much exactly does Sega pay you to favor the Saturn (which you obviously do)?
Zineca@worldnet.att.net

We're not making up these letters, folks! Sigh...we just can't win.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Dear EGM,

Do you think video games are more fun than they used to be? I mean, if somehow you could have been wired to a machine that measured the pleasure/enjoyment that you received from playing video games, what might it have read as video games evolved? Do you remember the first time you played Asteroids, Defender, Pac-Man, Donkey Kong, etc.? How does the enjoyment you received from playing those games for the first time compare to the enjoyment you received from playing Street Fighter II, Donkey Kong Country or Super Mario 64 for the first time? What kind of enjoyment might you have experienced if someone were able to send a Nintendo 64 with Super Mario 64 to you back in 1982? Conversely, if your memory of playing a game like Pac-Man could be erased, what kind of enjoyment might register on the machine if you were to play it now for the first time? Well, I guess you got the idea behind my question. Sometimes it feels like we're video game junkies, where we continually demand more audio, visual, tactile and gameplay sophistication to satiate our video game cravings. So, what do you think?

Michael Brooks
phaze@ocw.tccatexas.edu

Mr. Brooks brings up a very interesting subject and raises some great questions. The problem is, it is impossible to measure subjective values such as fun or enjoyment. Sure we would have loved (and be amazed at) Super Mario 64 in 1982, and we're sure we'd love Pac-Man if it were released today (we would probably wonder why no one ever thought of such a simple concept earlier). But would we love Pac-Man as much today as we did back then? Probably not. Like Mr. Brooks said, we're used to more sophisticated games nowadays (plus we were much younger back then with simpler tastes). All we know is, the future of gaming is bright as (most) every developer out there is continuing to raise the bar of quality for video games.



Pac-Man's dead, we doubt, but his world is held up by a more advanced game today!

but a few of us see such Street Fighter hires, that we can't get enough of it, original or not. And now for a SFIII letter on the lighter side...

Dear EGM,

I am pleased to announce the finding of a new move in Street Fighter III! It is the most devastating move ever to be introduced into the Street Fighter era. The move is so powerful it takes half the life off the opponent's bar if he/she is blocking and kills the opponent instantly if he/she isn't! This move is done by none other than Dudley. To do this move, you must be next to the opponent, do a half circle forward, a half circle back and press all six buttons simultaneously. Dudley will grab his opponent and bite off part of his ear! But be careful, if you do this move twice during a match you will be disqualified from the Street Fighting world (the round stops and says, "DISQUALIFIED," and you lose your tokens).

Joel Alambre
shokwave@ix.netcom.com

EGM: IT'S NOT JUST FOR KIDS ANYMORE

Dear EGM,
Showing the address to the Nude Raider Web site (Issue #97) was totally sexist. Showing naked video game characters really ticked me off. My little 8-year-old brother likes to read this magazine, but when he saw this, he wanted to go to the Nude Raider Web site right away. When parents see this, they are surely going to cancel their child's subscription.

Dwight Hopkins
lvhopkin@thepoint.net

Good thing you are a responsible big sister. Ms. Hopkins, and refused to let your little brother go to the site, right?

Dear EGM,
I gotta hand it to you guys. You're the FIRST game magazine I have to hide under my bed. Either you guys are getting really bored really fast, or someone there isn't "getting" any. The Lara Croft Web page had me rolling on the floor!

davejnet@t.netcom.com

"Getting" any? What does that mean? Hey well, what are we missing out on here? Whatever this "any" is, it could sure explain some of the peculiar behavior around the EGM offices...

Dear EGM,
Before I begin my letter, I would like to say that I have the utmost respect for your fine magazine, EGM. I find your magazine to be

informative, well-written and on the cutting edge. Having said that, it does pain me to write this. I have a complaint regarding the publication of the Web address for "Nude Raider." I am a 20-year-old heterosexual male, and nudity in no way surprises or shocks me. Even so, I feel that the publication of the Nude Raider address was a severe misjudgment of taste in your history of otherwise decent publishing. Nude Raider is a fine game. But Nude Raider had no relevance to the game, and it came off as cheesy, unnecessary and gratuitous. I must remind you that much of your readership is that of younger kids, who shouldn't be exposed to this sort of lamboy-fantasy, can't-get-a-date crap. And while it is definitely the parents' duty to protect their children, a lot of over-hormonalized pubescents will access the site without the "rents" knowledge. I'm not against the First Amendment in any way, but I am definitely against abusing it. As a magazine, your responsibility is to your readers. I believe there's enough of this type of trash circulating about on the Internet, without having it be advertised outside the medium (though to your credit, you did post a disclaimer). I'm not demanding some sort of apology; all I ask is that further thought be taken when another such article is considered for publication. In closing, let me once again say that EGM is still my favorite magazine. I have been a subscriber for five years. It's just that this year, resubscribing is not going to be such an easy decision.

Dare Chen
dare2live@juno.com

Like you said, it is the parents' ultimate responsibility to monitor their children. But if parents need a little help, they can find plenty of it on the Web. In fact, SurfWatch (www.surfwatch.com), a program designed to lock out adult sites, has blocked Nude Raider's site from young, prying eyes. As far as EGM's responsibility to its readers, we selected the least offensive images to include in our article. Moreover, we believe that the vast majority of our readers are sophisticated enough to handle "nude" images such as nudity without getting too worked up (after all, the average age, shown by independent studies, of an EGM reader is 20). And if you're the type to take offense to seeing this stuff on the Net, here's an easy solution: Don't look at it. No one is forcing you to enter Nude Raider's Web site address in your Web browser. Let's also be clear that we never condoned or encouraged anyone to visit the site. We strongly believe in the first amendment, and in the interest of writing a comprehensive article of Lara, we included the URL. The site has generated a lot of buzz in the gaming community, and for better or worse, we couldn't just ignore its existence. Please also keep in mind that Lara is really just a bunch of rendered polygons. She's not real. As most of you already know, you can very easily find much worse on the Web. Don't kid yourself into thinking that youngsters are going to be seeing nudity on the Internet for the first time because of us.

So...we printed the Nude Raider URL to cite the source for a piece in our article on Lara Croft, and a few people got upset. We're sincerely sorry that we offended you, but we're not sorry we printed it. You all know that EGM is, and always has been, on the edge, and if being on the edge means losing a few readers, well...we hope you enjoy reading the competition.

GOPE

Last issue, our game of the month was erroneously called Air Combat 2. At press time, the name of the game was set to be Air Combat 2 in the U.S., but it has since changed back to its original Japanese name of Ace Combat 2. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Also: Our UK editor David Rider contributed significant portions to last month's Pygnosis story. We failed to include his byline. Thanks David!

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Tips, Tricks and Strategies for Home and Arcade

September 1997

The summer's long dry spell has finally given up to a deluge of spectacular games being released this autumn. Our inkers are bustling at their seams with the awesome games that we'll be covering in our next issue.

First, after a long, antagostizing wait, *Final Fantasy VII* is finally making its way to U.S. shores.



The king of first-person shooter games is the revamped Duke Nukem 3D.

EGM will be diving deep into this much-anticipated game to bring out all its goodies. Look for the first part of the *Final Fantasy VII* complete walk-through.

Next, gore-fest lovers will get their belly-full of Duke Nukem's blood, guts and humor in the big-name computer crossover. Although some of the more...er...suggestive stuff has been covered up, none of the gameplay has been tampered with.

EGM will show the secrets of 007 in the GoldenEye: 007 strategy guide. And it doesn't matter if it is shaken or stirred, because everything is in there for the taking!

FEATURE STORY



Final Fantasy VII is finally here in the States, and we'll show it out in our September issue!



Instead of watching him on the big screen, play as Bond in GoldenEye: 007.

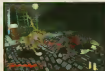
ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

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FEATURE STORY

Doesn't you hate it when you can always score with a certain play in a sports game or when you can always crush the computer by using the same combo repeatedly? Find out why when *EGM* looks at the brains inside the games.



Every TV show has a cheesy Halloween special, so why can't we? Be afraid. Be very afraid.

Now that the E! buzz is dying down, it's time to get excited about fall, gaming's best season.

Serving as a prelude to the grand holiday season is the highly anticipated *Final Fantasy VII*. *EGM*'s Review Crew will determine whether Square's much ballyhooed RPG was worth the wait. Also on the docket are Sony's NFL GameDay '98 and Bomberman for the Saturn—the sequels to some of gaming's most popular titles.

Features? Hoo-boy, do we have features. We finally decided that it was safe enough to let *EGM* editor Shawn Smith on the Internet for 24 hours. Follow his questionable exploits next issue. If that's too heavy a topic for you, dig into the brains of some of the most popular



This is Shawn Smith. We really shouldn't allow him on the Internet.

but we're gonna do it anyway. I hope Netscape fixed all their security bugs.

console games. *EGM*'s look into artificial intelligence will discuss, dissect and evaluate how games think. And finally, you won't want to miss *EGM*'s long-awaited Halloween Special. We'll look at the scariest video games and let you know if they lived up to their horrific billing.

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